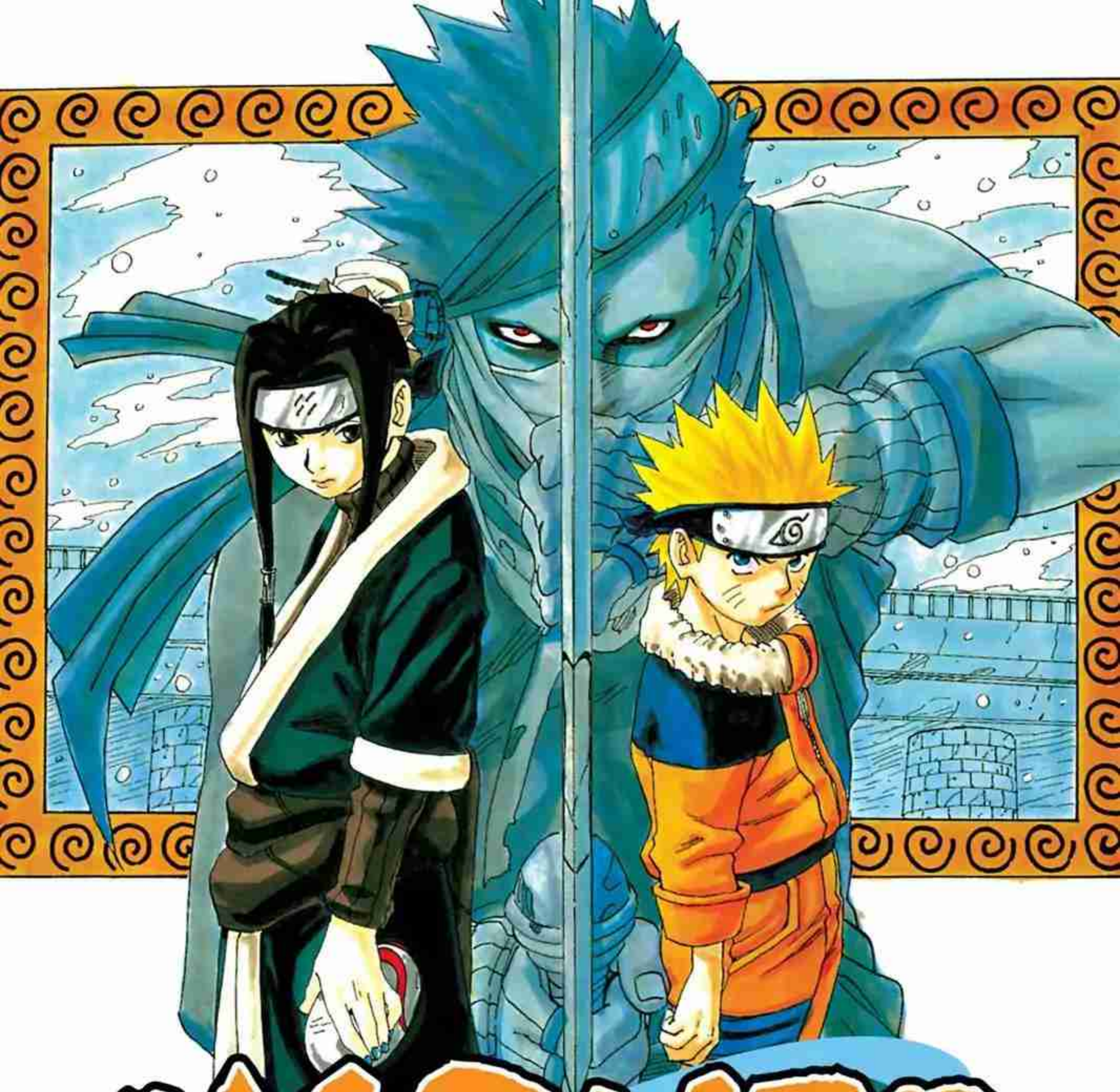




NARUTO

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Masashi Kishimoto **volume**

4



岸本 斉史

Thank you for your constant fan letters.
When I'm tired...
When I'm bored...
When I'm groaning in pain...
When I'm sleepy...
They always help to flip my heart's switch.
I read them all.
Thanks truly!!

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2000



Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** ("Mechanism"). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.





NARUTO VOL. 4
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

This graphic novel contains material that was originally published in English in **SHONEN JUMP** #15-18.

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic & fantasy violence.



www.shonenjump.com

SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

NARUTO™



VOL. 4

THE NEXT LEVEL

STORY AND ART BY
MASASHI KISHIMOTO

SAKURA サクラ

Smart and studious, Sakura is the brightest of Naruto's classmates, but she's constantly distracted by her crush on Sasuke. Her goal: to win Sasuke's heart!

NARUTO ナルト

When Naruto was born, a destructive fox spirit was imprisoned inside his body. Spurned by the older villagers, he's grown into an attention-seeking troublemaker. His goal: to become the village's next *Hokage*.

SASUKE サスケ

The top student in Naruto's class, Sasuke comes from the prestigious Uchiha clan. His goal: to get revenge on a mysterious person who wronged him in the past.





KAKASHI カカシ

The elite ninja assigned to train Naruto, Sasuke, and Sakura. His *sharingan* ("mirror-wheel eye") allows him to reflect and mimic enemy *ninjutsu*.



ZABUZA 再不斬

A ruthless ninja assassin and mass-murderer known as "The Demon." He specializes in techniques involving water and mist.



HAKU 白

A mysterious orphan who befriends Naruto. Naruto doesn't realize that his new friend is Zabuza's loyal masked assistant, who fights with chiropractic needles.



TAZUNA タズナ

An old bridge-builder struggling to bring prosperity to the Land of Waves. The evil millionaire Gato has hired Zabuza to stop him from completing his newest bridge.

THE STORY SO FAR...

Twelve years ago, a destructive nine-tailed fox spirit attacked the ninja village of Konohagakure. The *Hokage*, or village champion, defeated the fox by sealing its soul into the body of a baby boy. Now that boy, Uzumaki Naruto, has grown up to become a ninja-in-training, learning the art of *ninjutsu* with his classmates Sakura and Sasuke.

Tired of easy exercises, Naruto and his classmates make the mistake of asking their teacher, Kakashi, for a really hard assignment... and find themselves in the Land of Waves, protecting a bridge-builder named Tazuna. But the job turns truly dangerous when the notorious assassin Zabuza shows up. While Kakashi holds off Zabuza and Sakura protects Tazuna, Naruto and Sasuke face Zabuza's assistant Haku. In the battle, Sasuke sacrifices himself to save Naruto from Haku's deadly throwing needles. Now, watching his classmate fall, Naruto feels something terrible stir within him...

NARUTO

VOL. 4 THE NEXT LEVEL

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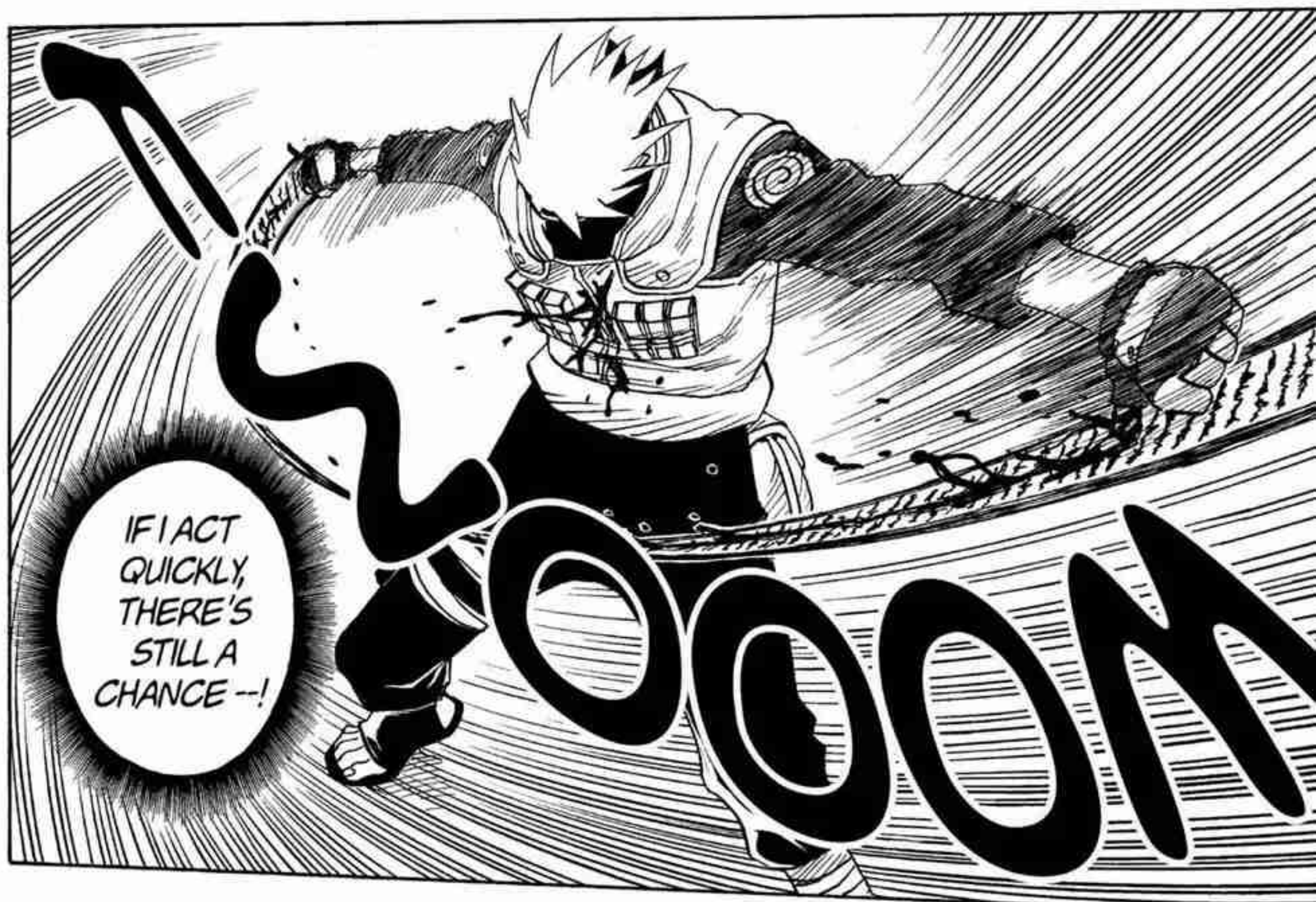
Number 28: Nine Tails...!!













...BUT WHAT
DO YOU SAY
WE STOP
SCREWING
AROUND...



...AND WRAP
THIS UP
RIGHT NOW?
ONE BIG
MOVE,
WINNER
TAKE ALL?



WHAT'S
LEFT,
KAKASHI?

SHOW
ME WHAT
YOU'VE
GOT!

AN
INTRIGUING
NOTION...



HE'S SO
BLOODTHIRSTY!
HE'S COMPLETELY
CHANGED
FROM THE BOY
OF JUST
MINUTES AGO!

FWOOSH!



POW!



FWOOSH!



HE... HE
DEFLECTED
THEM...
WITHOUT EVEN
TOUCHING
THEM?!



GLARE





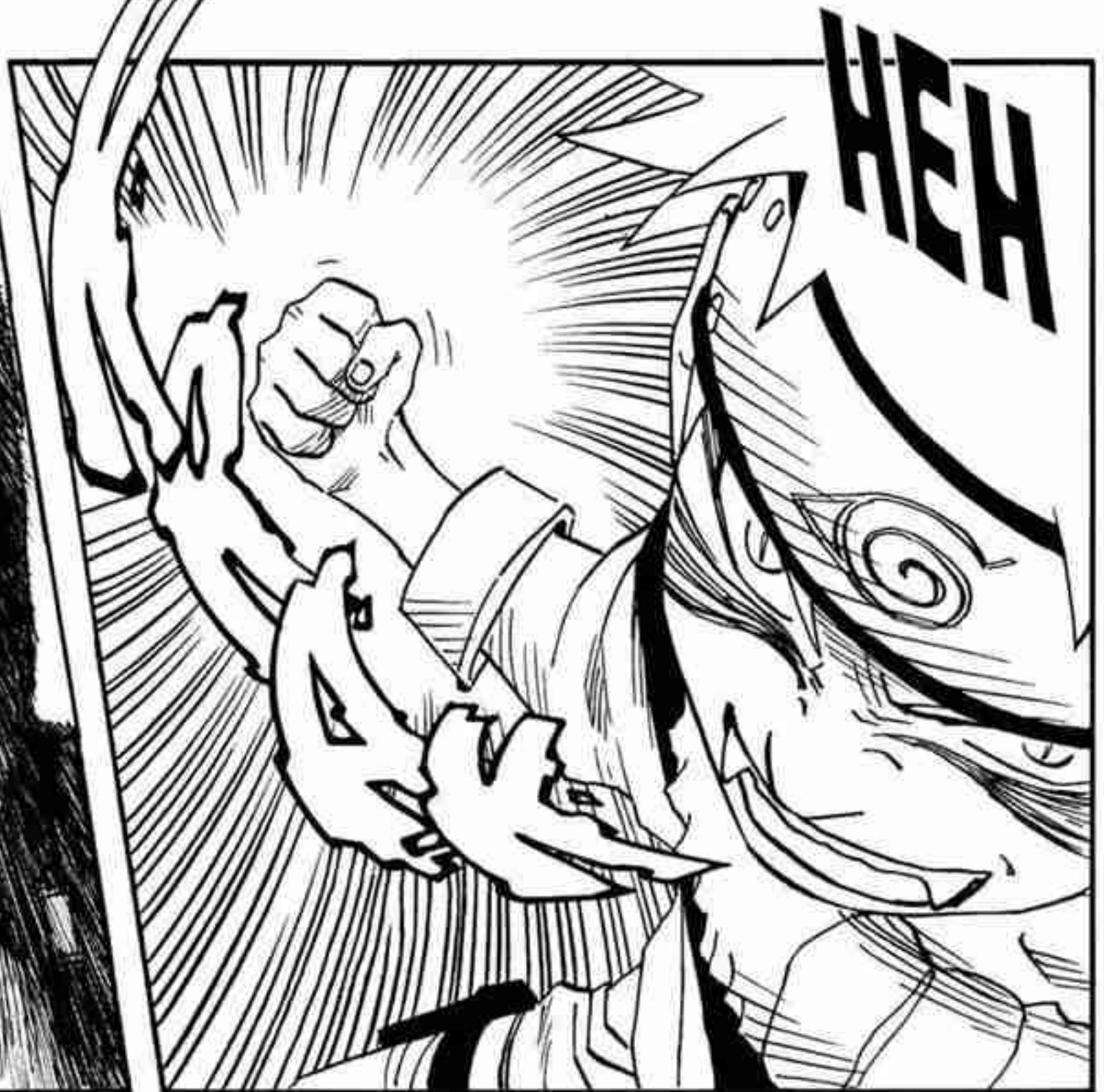
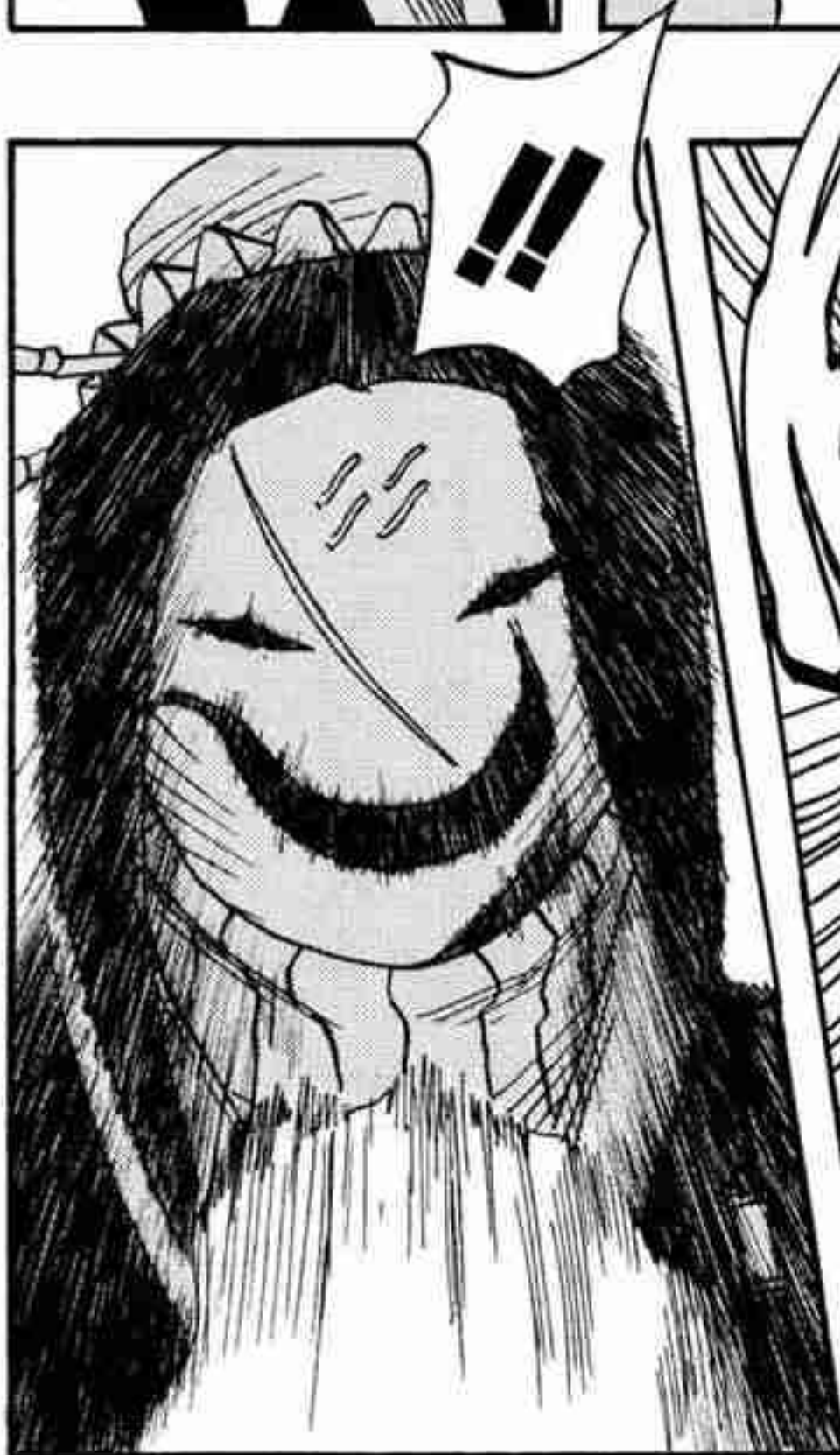
I'VE GOT
TO MAKE
IT TO THE
NEXT
MIRROR!

TA



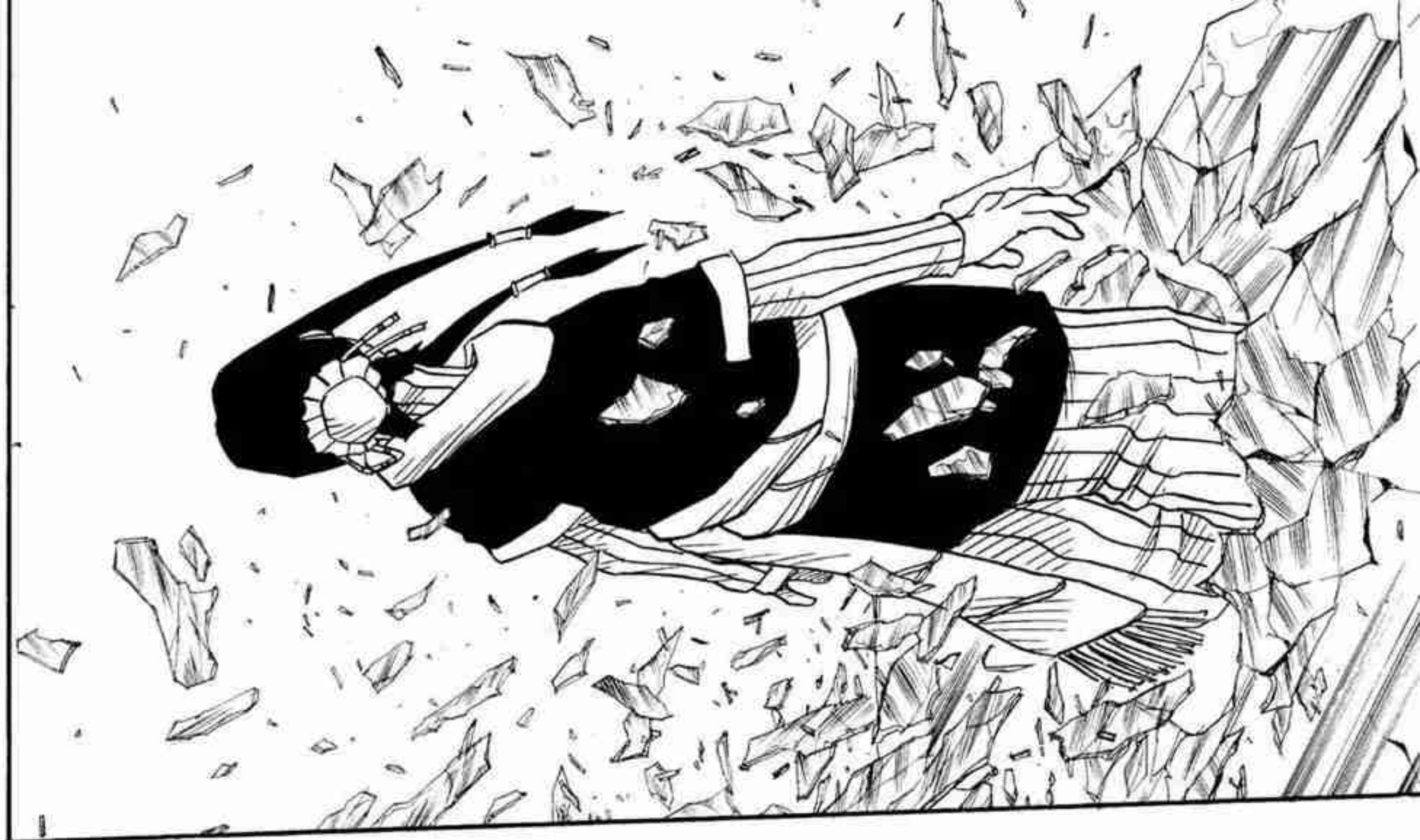


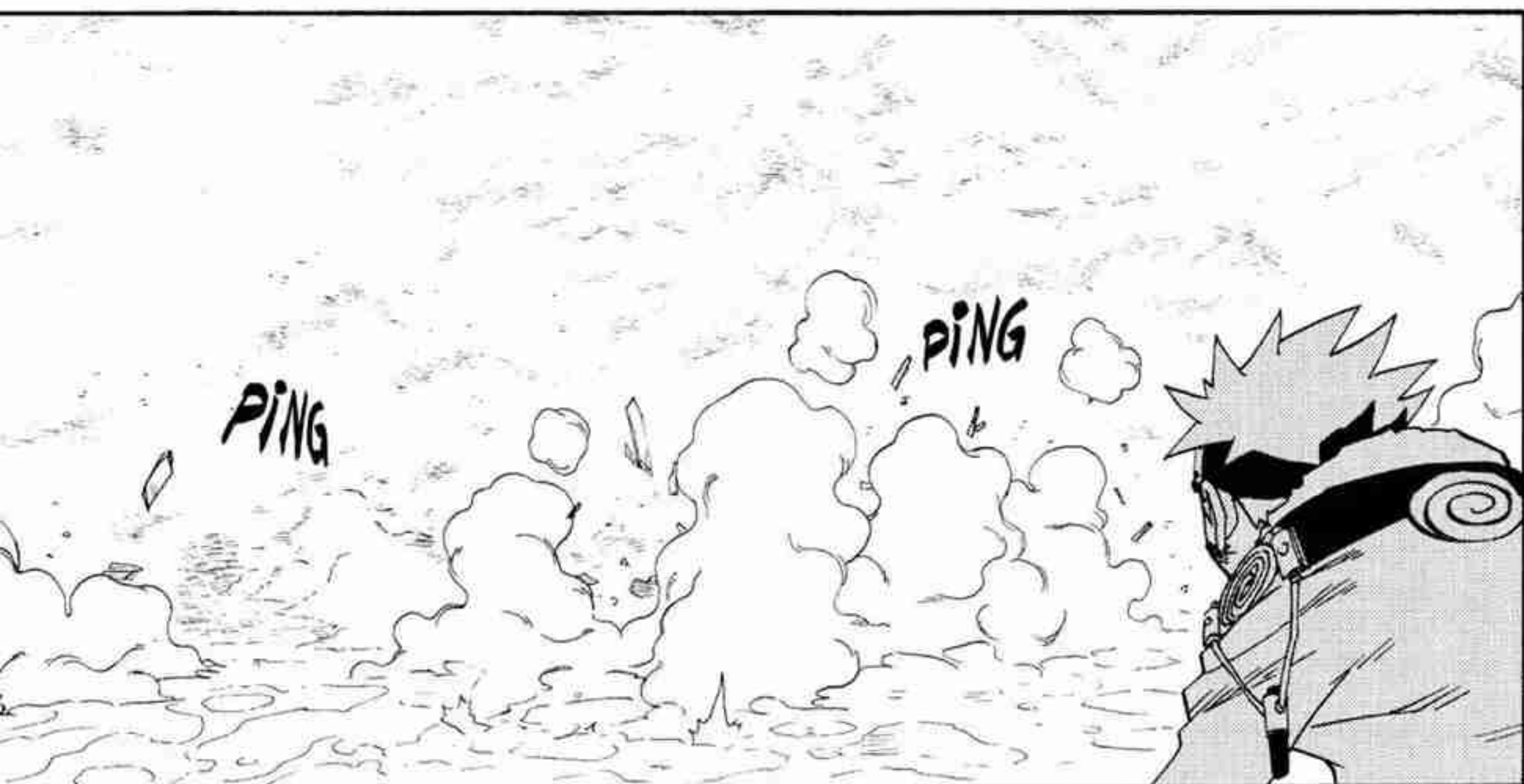
















KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S FIRST MANGA REJECT SPECIAL!



YOUICHI



KAORU



KATCHIN



YUMI



THE CHARACTER DESIGNS TO THE LEFT ARE FROM A FAILED PROJECT OF MINE CALLED "WANDERING DETOUR" THAT I CAME UP WITH RIGHT AFTER I WON THE HOP-STEP STAR AWARD.

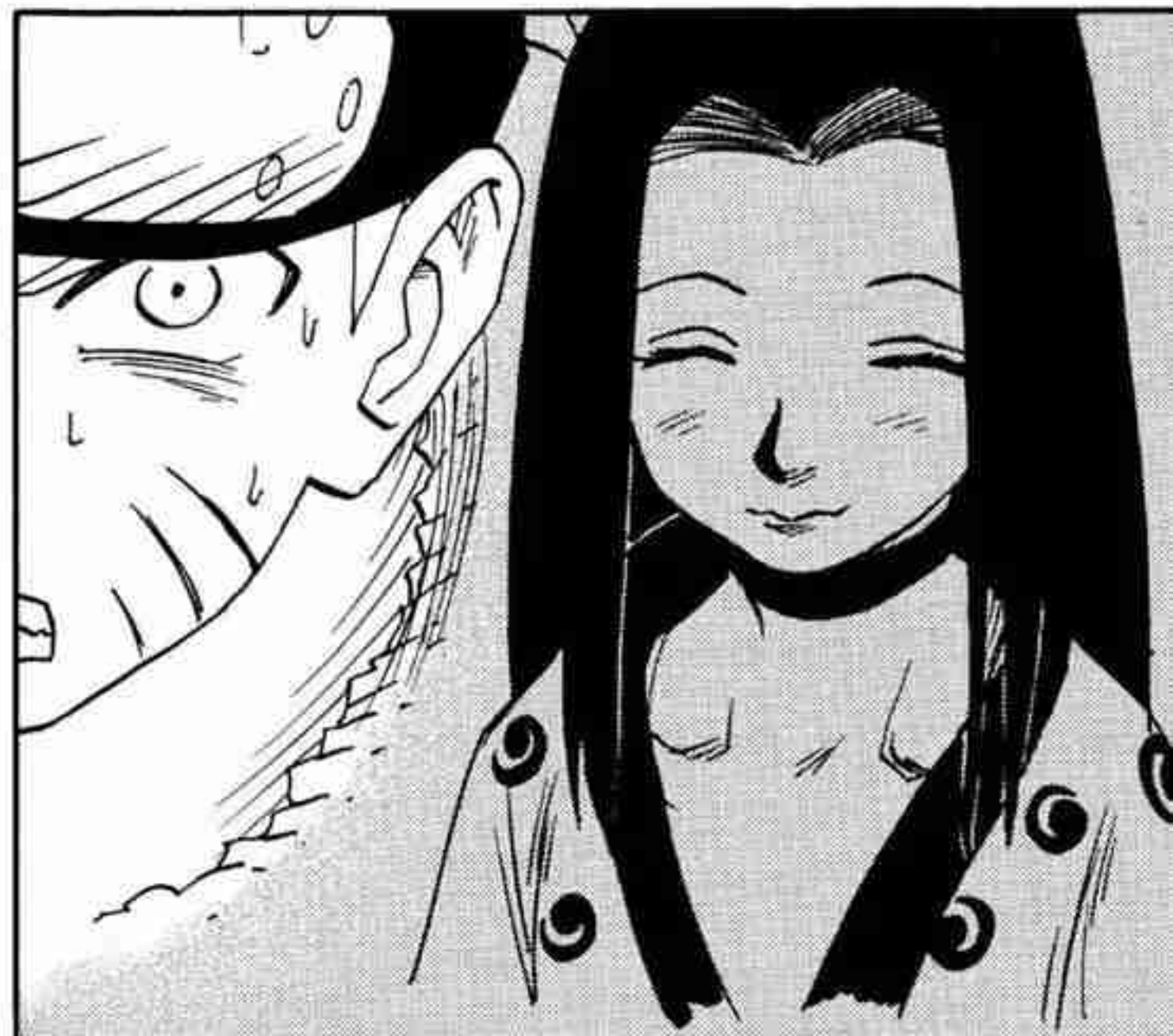
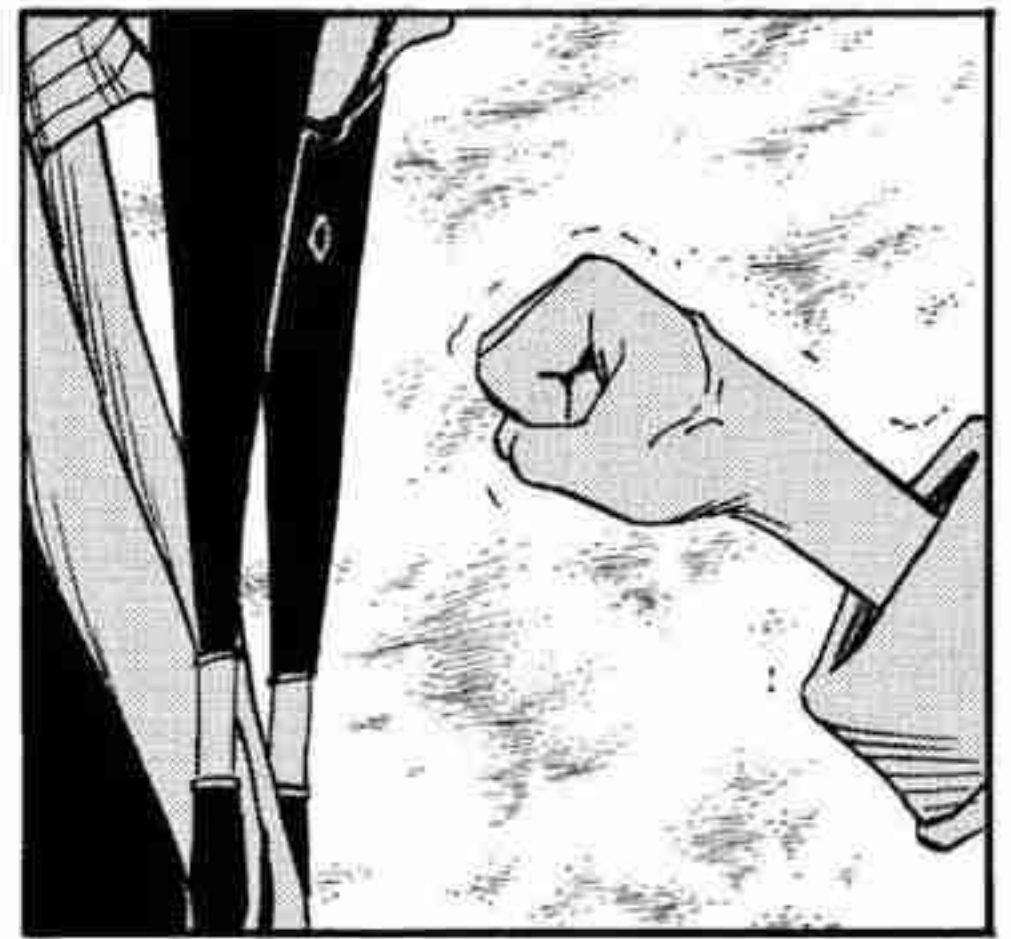
THE STORY IS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KID NAMED AKIRA AND HIS FRIENDS KATCHIN AND KAORU FIND A WALLET ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL, AND OF ALL OF THE TROUBLE THAT ENSUES WHEN THE THREE OF THEM DECIDE TO KEEP THE MONEY THAT THEY FIND AND SPEND IT ON THEMSELVES. MAYBE IT WAS TOO HARD TO FOLLOW, OR SIMPLY TOO DOWN-TO-EARTH FOR A BOYS' ADVENTURE MAGAZINE... BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON, IT WAS SUMMARILY REJECTED.

IT WAS MY FIRST REJECTION EVER. BUT I WAS SUCH A KID BACK THEN, EVEN GETTING MY FIRST REJECTION SEEMED LIKE A BIG DEAL, ANOTHER PROFESSIONAL MILESTONE I'D PASSED. FOR THE LONGEST TIME, I'D BEEN READING OTHER MANGA CARTOONISTS' TALES OF WOE ABOUT THE REJECTIONS THEY'D GOTTEN, AND I'D BEEN FEELING A LITTLE LEFT OUT. WITH "WANDERING DETOUR," I WAS FINALLY IN THE CLUB! I EVEN BRAGGED ABOUT IT A LITTLE. LIKE I SAID, I WAS A KID THEN. NOW, I'M A TRUE PROFESSIONAL, AND I AGREE WITH MY FRIENDS: "REJECTION SUCKS!" (LAUGHTER)











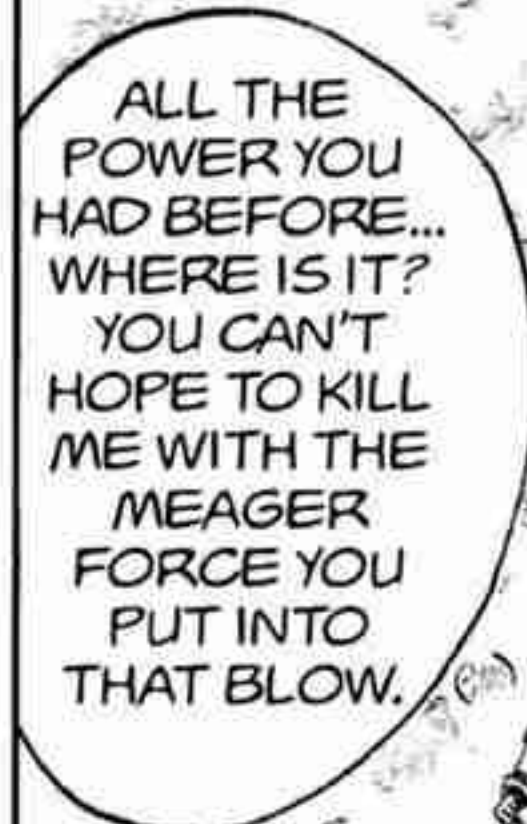


I'M WILLING
TO DO
WHATEVER
IT TAKES...
TO PROTECT
THE ONE
I CARE
ABOUT
MOST....

DOING
SO IS MY
OWN
DREAM.



...DO YOU
HAVE...
ANYONE
SPECIAL
IN YOUR
LIFE?



ALL THE
POWER YOU
HAD BEFORE...
WHERE IS IT?
YOU CAN'T
HOPE TO KILL
ME WITH THE
MEAGER
FORCE YOU
PUT INTO
THAT BLOW.



BUT
DON'T
YOU
SEE?



... THAT
SHOWING
MERCY
TO AN
ENEMY
IS KINDNESS.

THEY
SPARE
THE FOE
WHOSE
LIFE IS IN
THEIR
HANDS...



OFTEN
PEOPLE
HAVE IT
WRONG,
MISTAKENLY
BELIEVING...



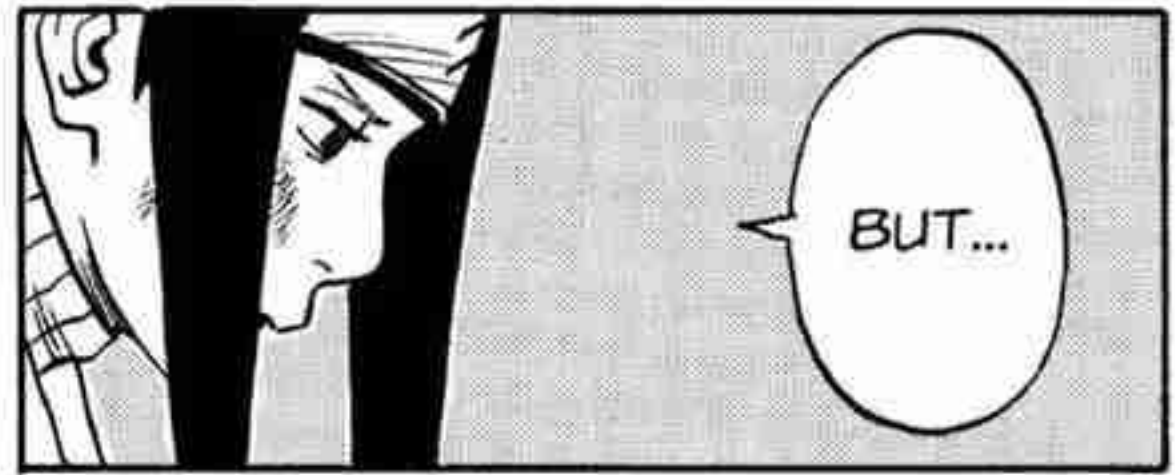
...TO GO
ON LIVING...
ALONE AND
UNLOVED...
WHEN
DEFEAT'S
ALREADY
COST YOU
YOUR
DREAM!



IT'S
AN
EMPTY
EXISTENCE...







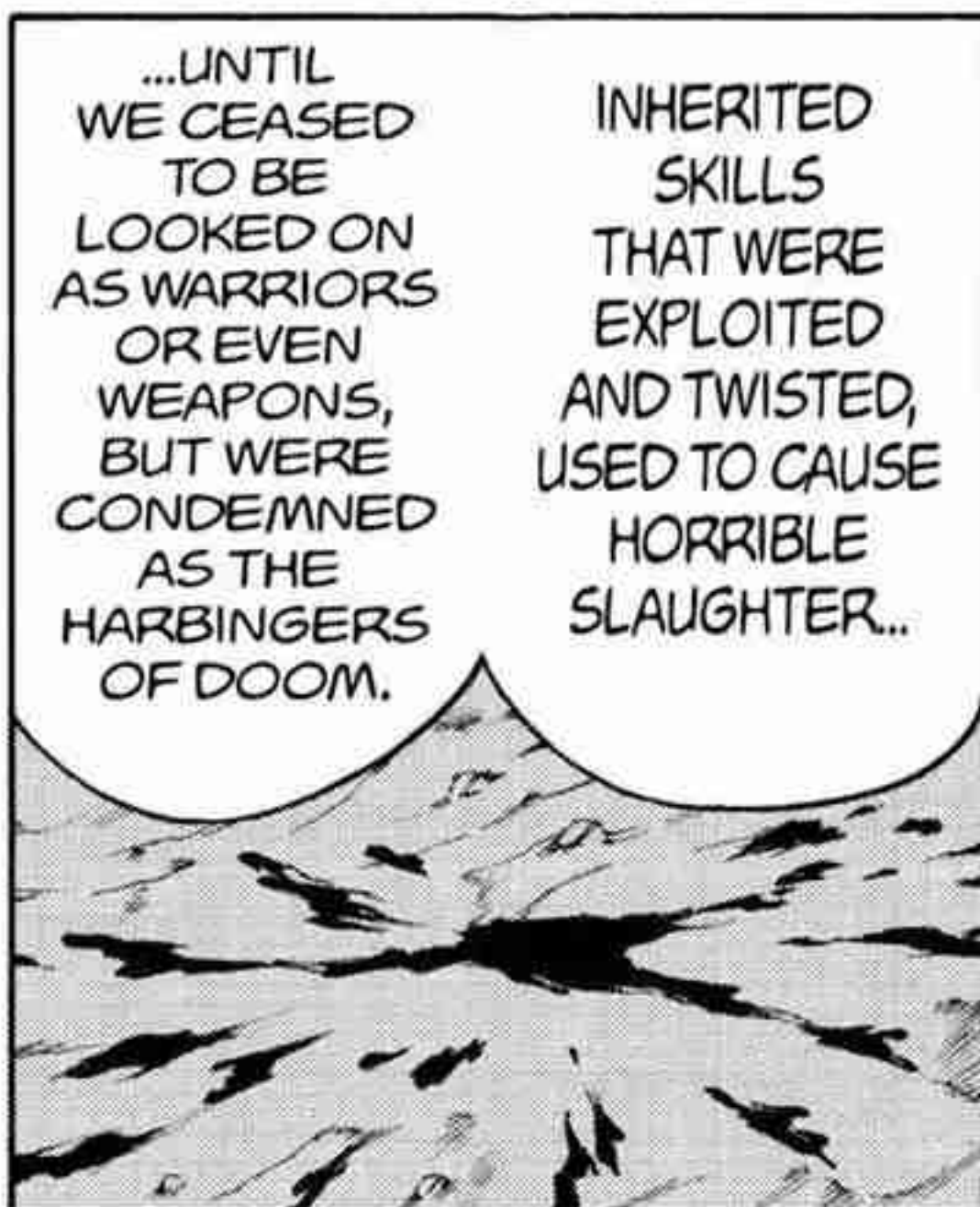


WHY--?



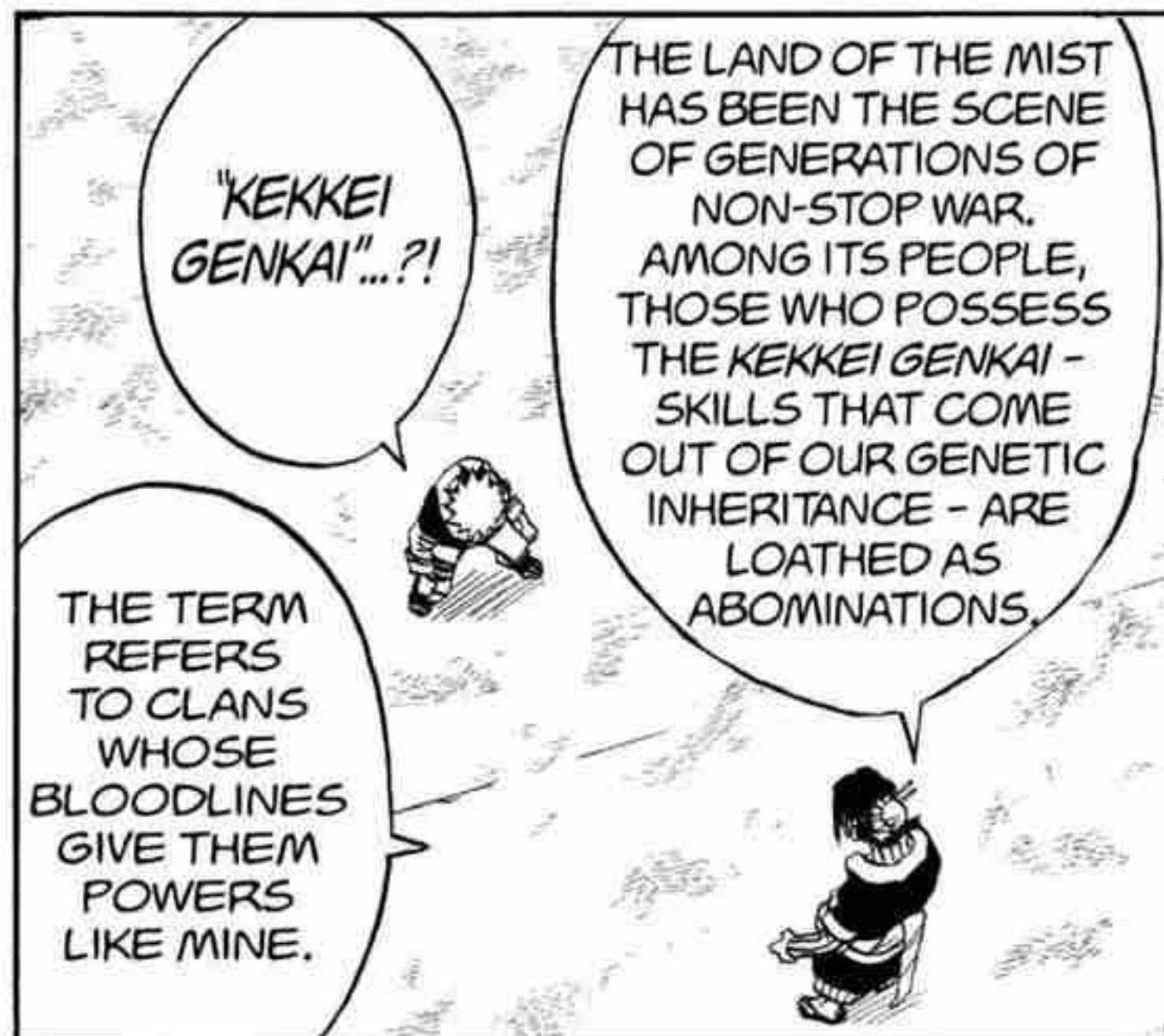
...AND
TRIED
TO
KILL
ME.

MY
FATHER
KILLED
MY
MOTHER...



...UNTIL
WE CEASED
TO BE
LOOKED ON
AS WARRIORS
OR EVEN
WEAPONS,
BUT WERE
CONDEMNED
AS THE
HARBINGERS
OF DOOM.

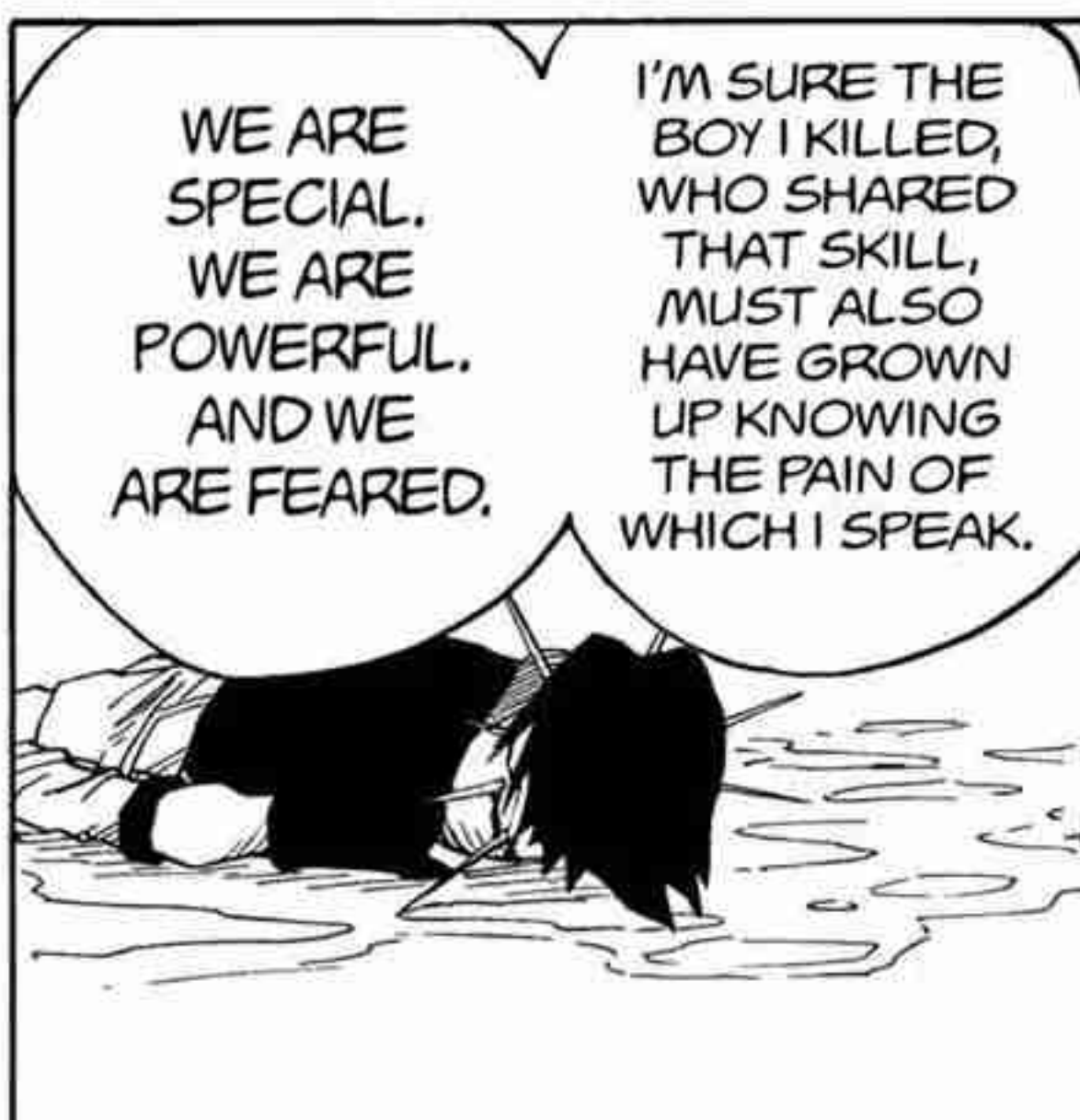
INHERITED
SKILLS
THAT WERE
EXPLOITED
AND TWISTED,
USED TO CAUSE
HORRIBLE
SLAUGHTER..



"KEKKEI
GENKAI"...?!

THE TERM
REFERS
TO CLANS
WHOSE
BLOODLINES
GIVE THEM
POWERS
LIKE MINE.

THE LAND OF THE MIST
HAS BEEN THE SCENE
OF GENERATIONS OF
NON-STOP WAR.
AMONG ITS PEOPLE,
THOSE WHO POSSESS
THE KEKKEI GENKAI -
SKILLS THAT COME
OUT OF OUR GENETIC
INHERITANCE - ARE
LOATHED AS
ABOMINATIONS.



WE ARE
SPECIAL.
WE ARE
POWERFUL.
AND WE
ARE FEARED.

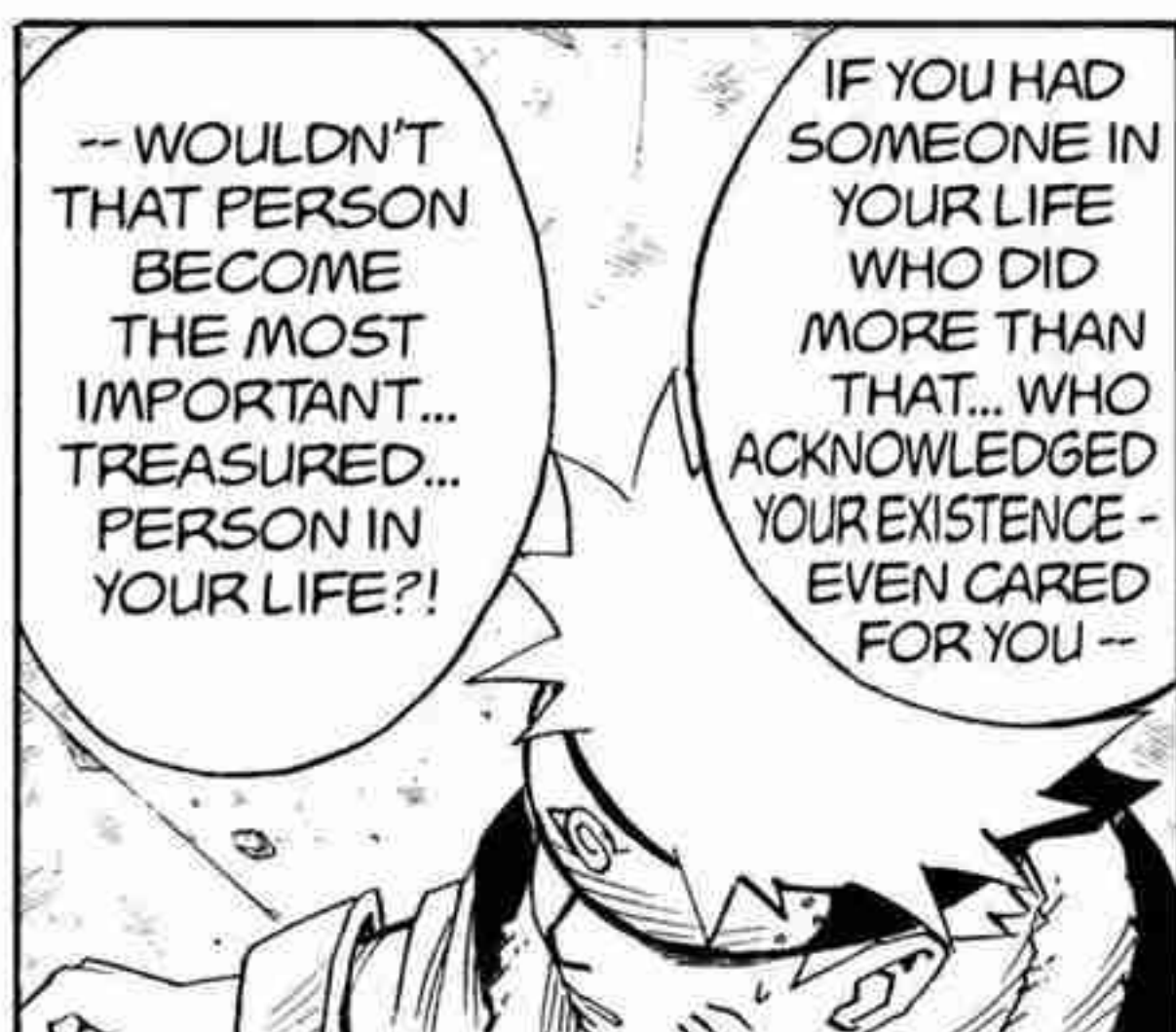
I'M SURE THE
BOY I KILLED,
WHO SHARED
THAT SKILL,
MUST ALSO
HAVE GROWN
UP KNOWING
THE PAIN OF
WHICH I SPEAK.

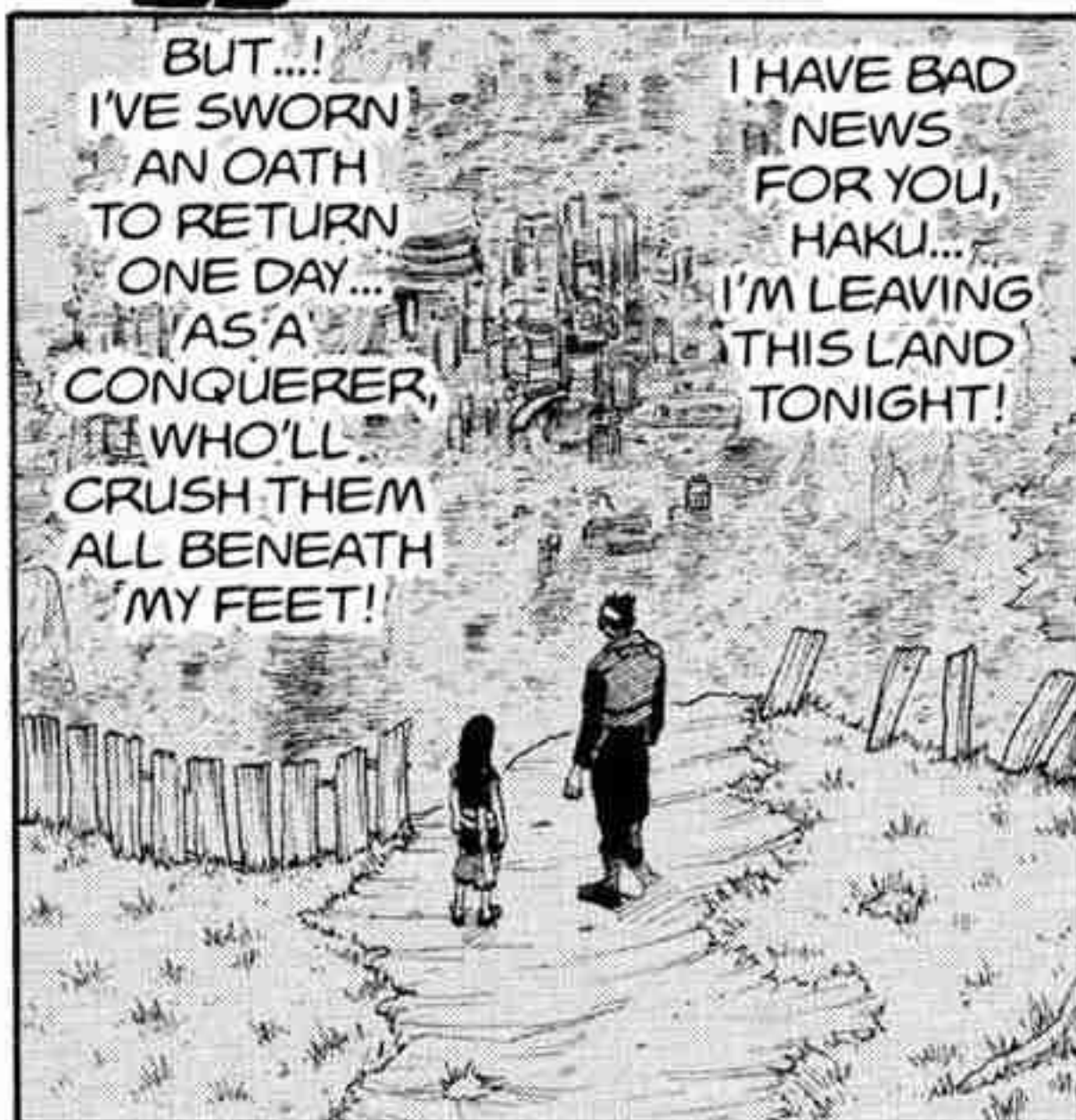
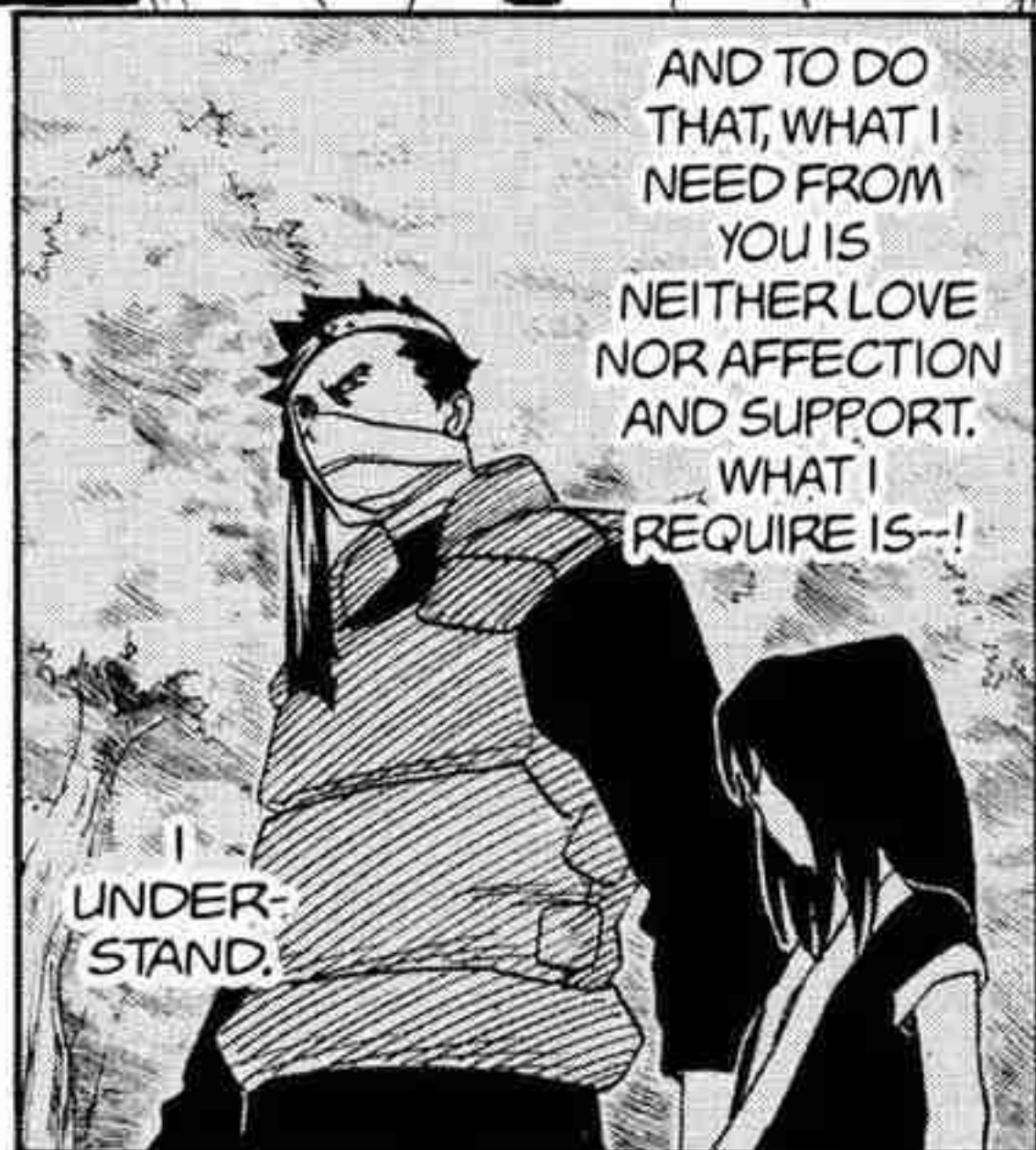


EXPOSURE
MEANT
CERTAIN
DEATH!

AFTER THE WARS
WERE OVER, WE
WHO POSSESSED
THIS TRAIT
WERE HUNTED,
ONLY ABLE TO
SURVIVE BY HIDING
THE EXISTENCE
OF OUR SKILLS
AND OUR
BLOODLINE
AWAY.









KEEP ME
BESIDE YOU,
AND I'LL
STRIKE
WHERE YOU
TELL ME TO
STRIKE,
KILL WHOM
YOU TELL
ME TO KILL.

I AM YOUR
WEAPON
AND YOUR
TOOL.



FORGIVE ME ...
MASTER
ZABUZA...
YOUR TOOL
HAS FAILED
YOU.



GOOD
BOY.

HEH...



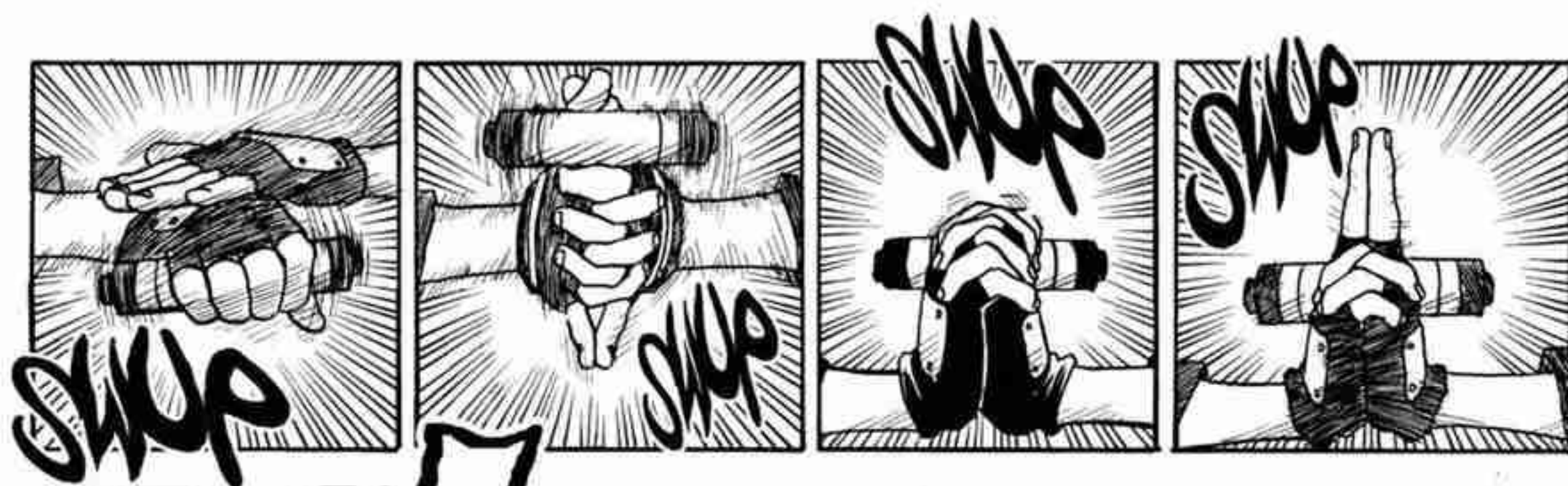
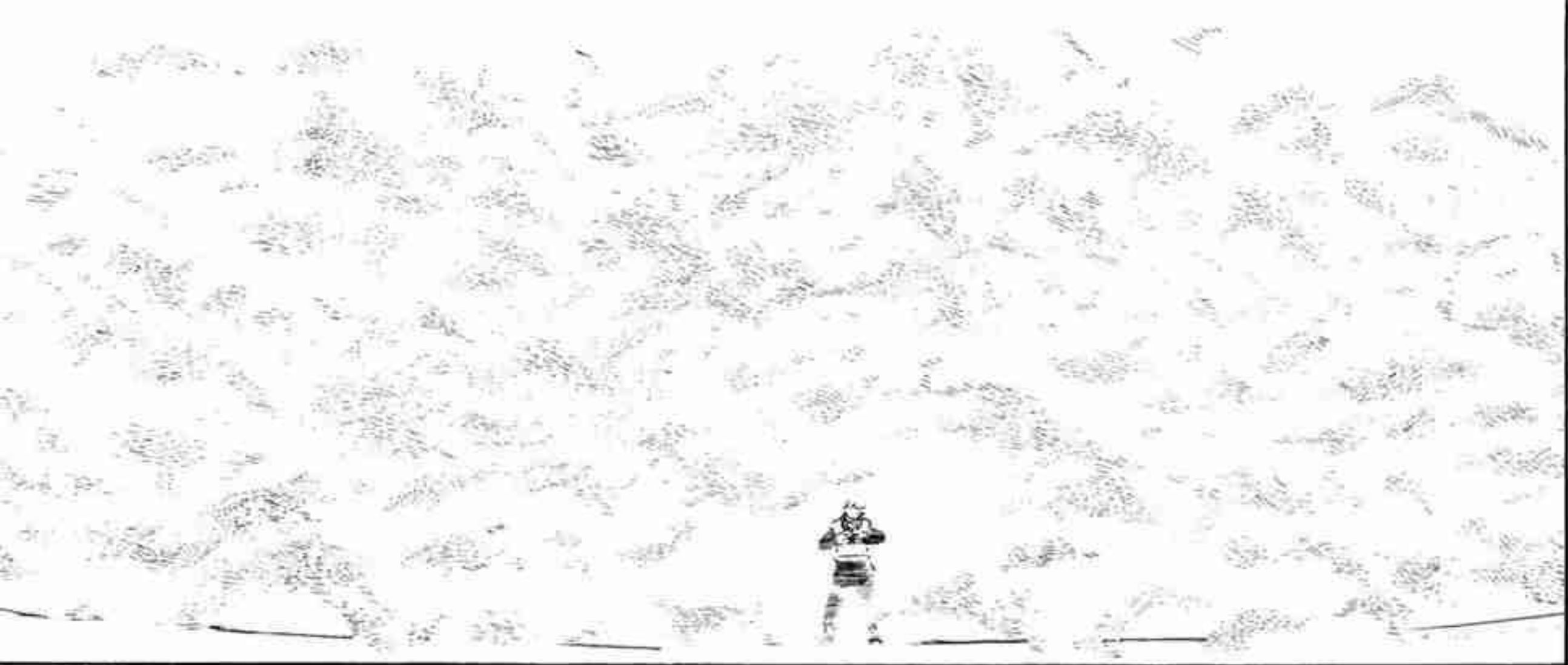
TAKE
MY
LIFE.

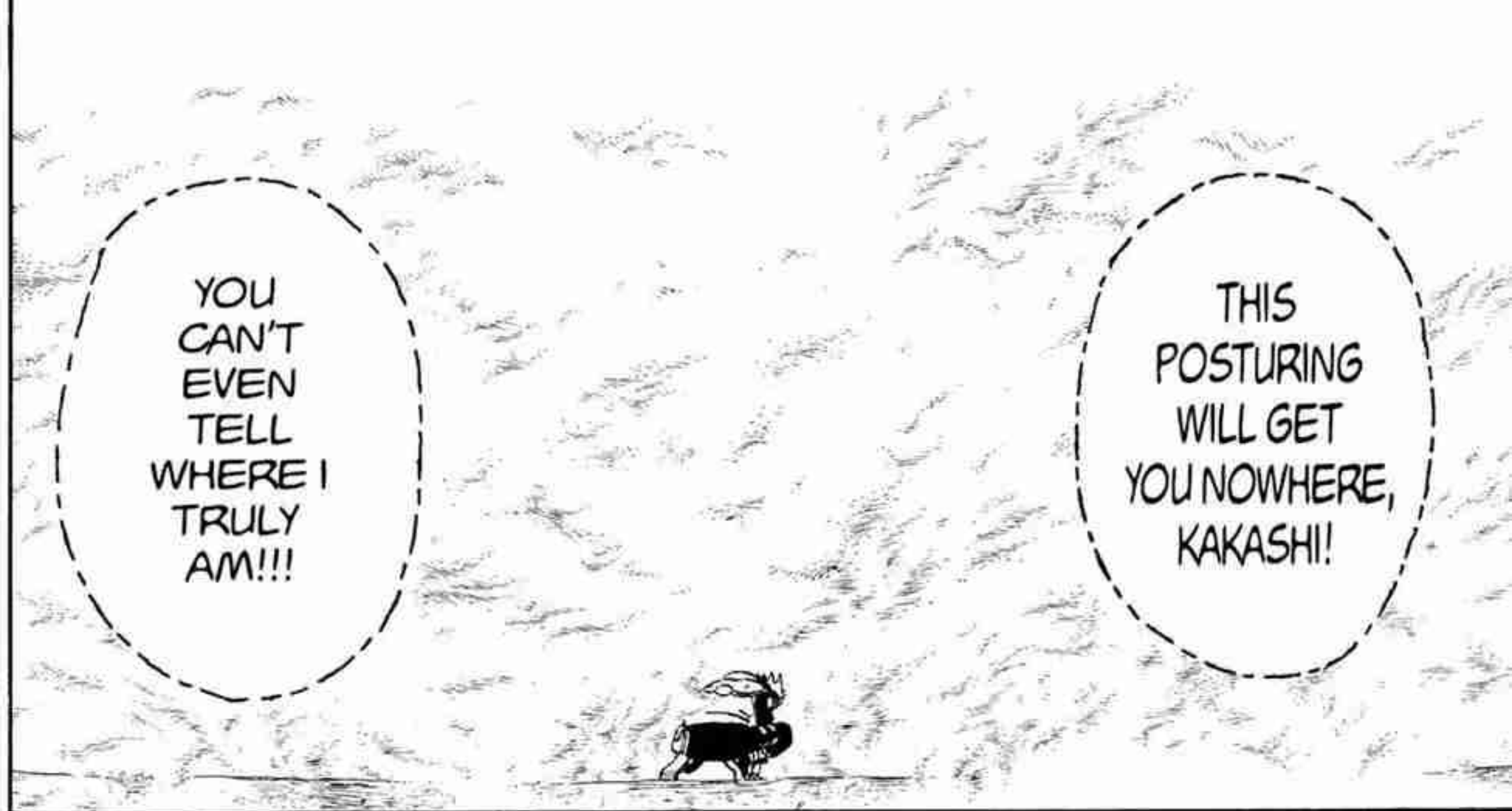


PLEASE...

NARUTO...











UHN...



THIS
CONJURATION
IS
SPECIFICALLY
DESIGNED
FOR
TRACKING.

IT WORKED
BECAUSE
YOU SHUT
YOUR EYES
IN THE MIST.



KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S SECOND MANGA REJECT SPECIAL.



THE DESIGN TO THE LEFT IS FROM ANOTHER FLOP - A MANGA CALLED "ASIAN PUNK", THAT WAS RESOUNDINGLY REJECTED AT EVERY TURN. TO BE FRANK, THE PREMISE WAS-NOT COINCIDENTALLY-KINDA LIKE "GHOSTBUSTERS."

THE MAIN CHARACTER WAS A KID WITH AN AXE TAKING ON AN EVIL FENG-SHUI MASTER WHO COULD SUMMON AND CONTROL EVIL SPIRITS... AND THE MAIN CHARACTER WASN'T REALLY HUMAN HIMSELF, BUT HAD BEEN CREATED BY SOME GREATER POWER. THERE WAS MORE, BUT WE DON'T NEED TO GO INTO IT HERE.

THE THING IS, WITH THAT STORY, MY PRIZE-WINNING SERIES KARAKUR, AND NARUTO, IT OCCURS ME TO ME THAT MY HEROES ARE ALWAYS THESE YOUNG GUYS. I GUESS I'M JUST A SUCKER FOR BOYS' ADVENTURE TALES!



Number 30: Your Future is...!!



WE KNOW ALL ABOUT THE FAILED COUP YOU AND YOUR FOLLOWERS STAGED, AND ABOUT THE ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE MIZUKAGE, THE WATER SHADOW, LEADER OF YOUR PEOPLE.

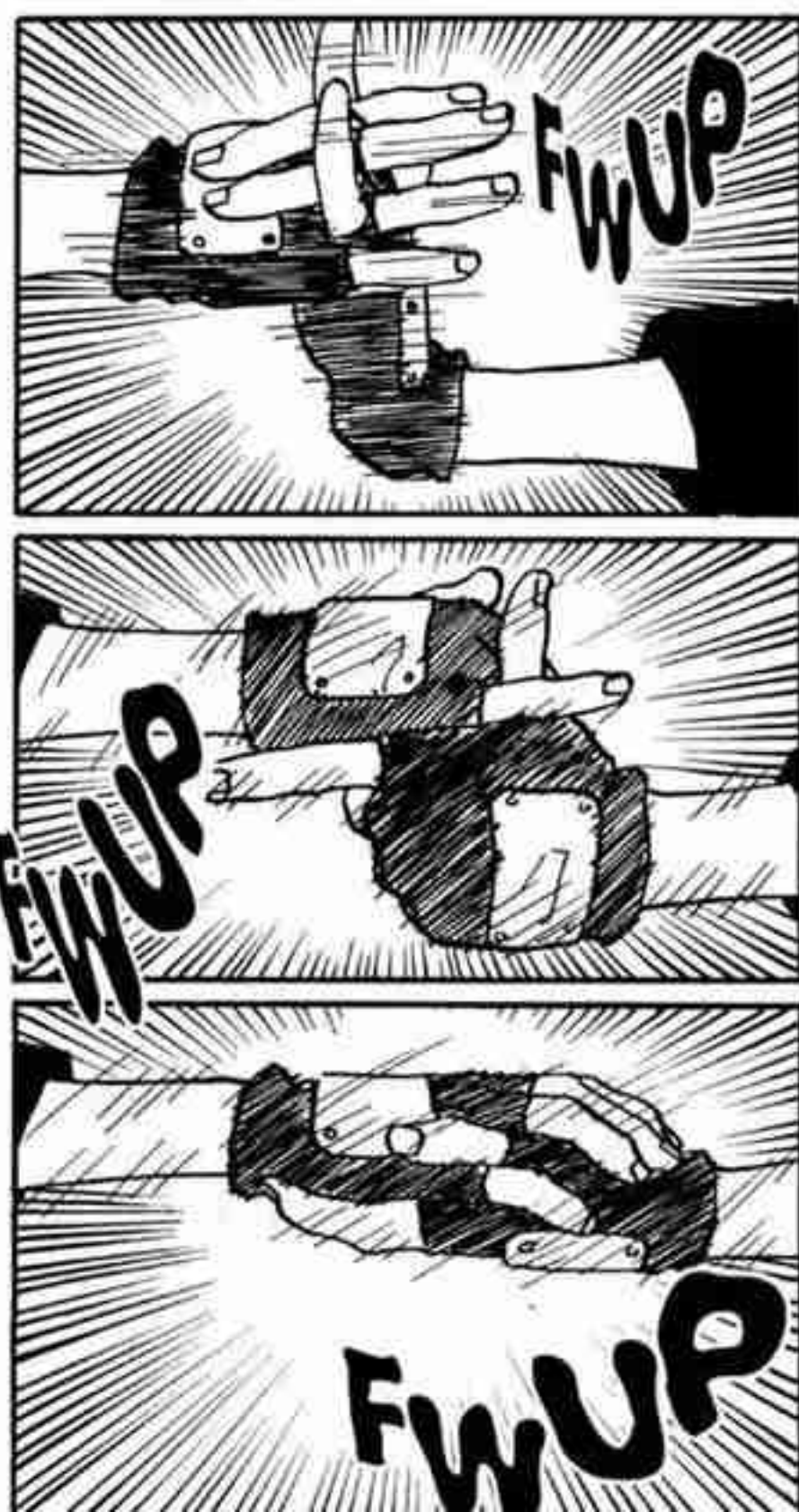
THE DAY YOU DESERTED THE LAND OF THE MIST AND BECAME A TURNCOAT AND RENEGADE, YOUR NAME AND YOUR ACTIONS WERE REPORTED TO US AT KONOHA VILLAGE.

YOU SCHEMED YOUR SCHEMES...

...

IT'S WHY YOU'D STOOP TO WORK FOR A PARASITE LIKE GATŌ.

YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR A SECOND ATTEMPT, AND BARELY STAYING A JUMP AHEAD OF THE SHINOBI HUNTERS... WHICH IS WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE.







THAT'S
NOT
WHAT A
TRUE
SHINOBI
DOES.



YOU'RE
WILLING TO
SACRIFICE
THIS PLACE
AND EVERYONE
IN IT, JUST
TO ADVANCE
YOUR OWN
AMBITIONS.



AND
I'M
NOT
ABOUT
TO
STOP.

SPARE
ME THE
CIVICS
LESSON
AND
PHILOSOPHY.
I'M
FIGHTING
FOR
MY OWN
IDEALS.



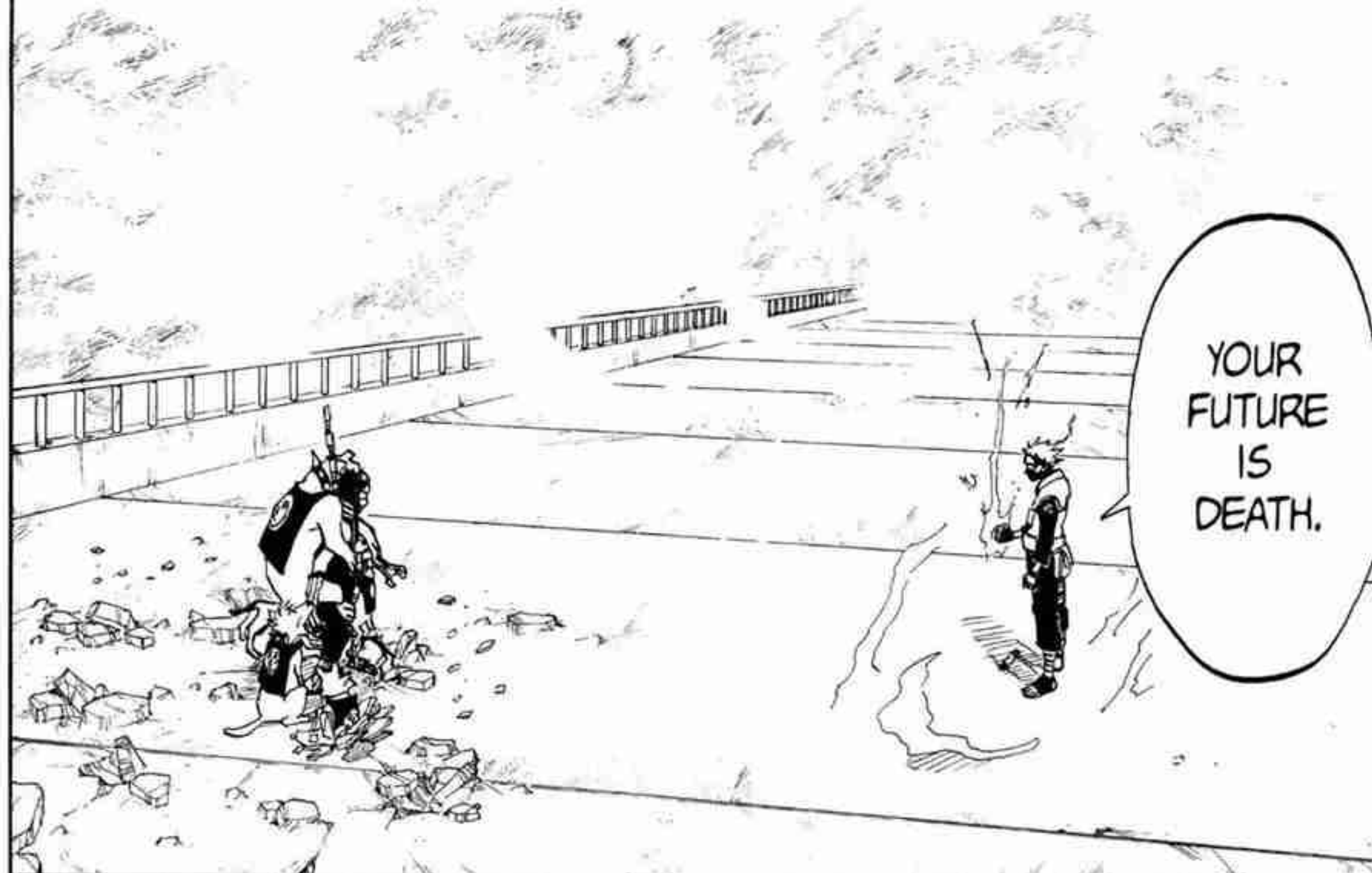
GIVE
UP...

HUH?!

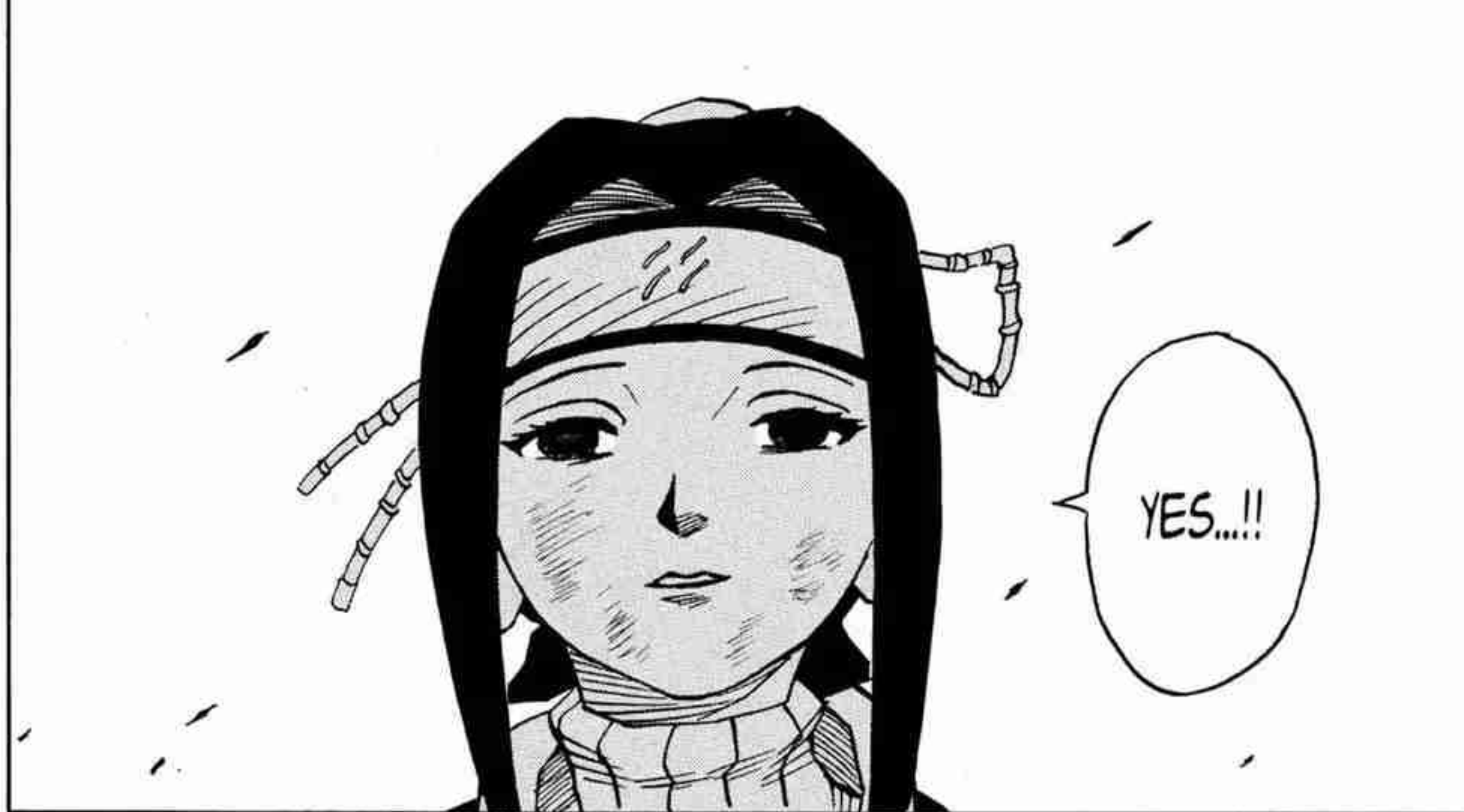


I'LL
SAY
THIS
JUST
ONCE
MORE.



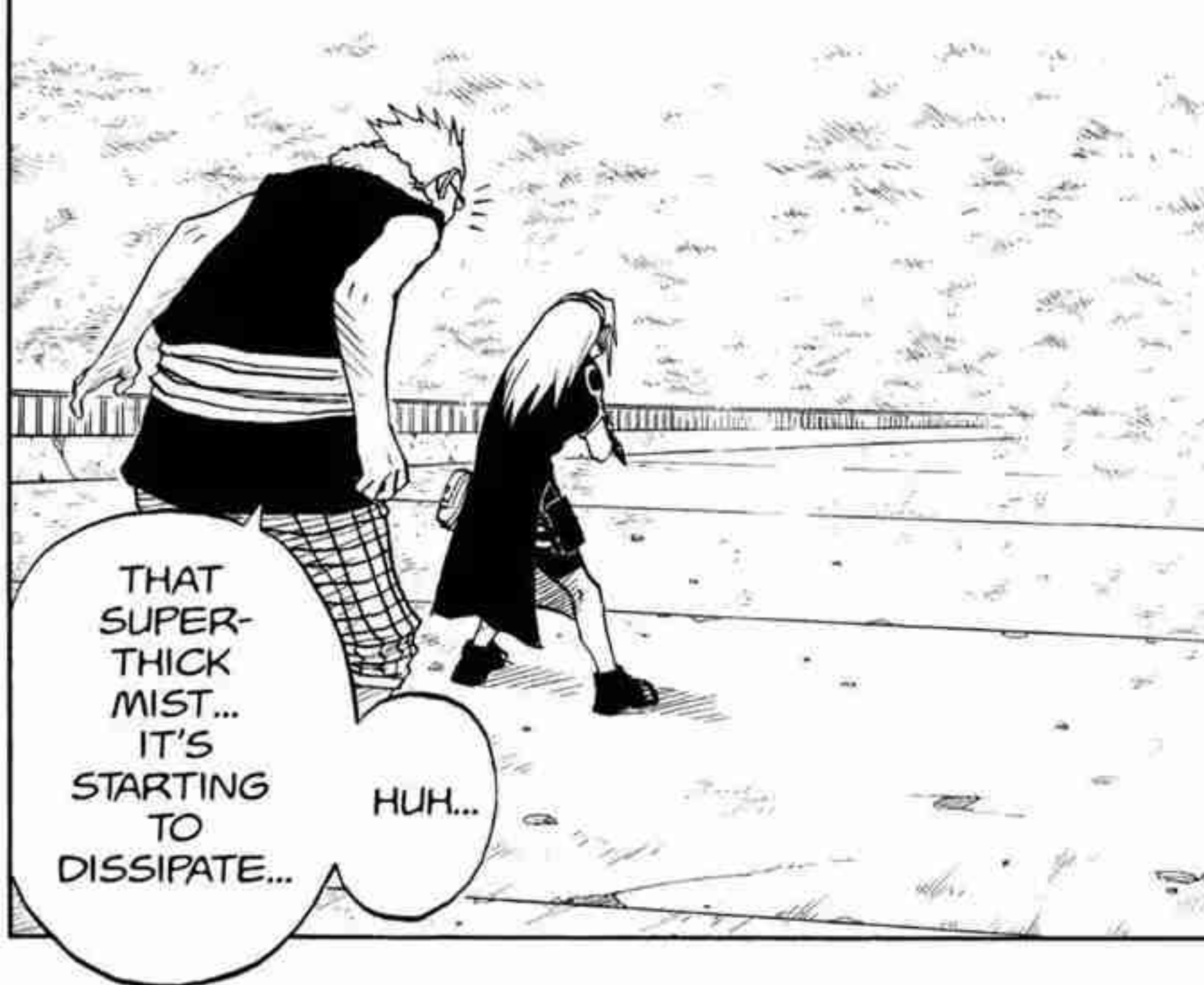






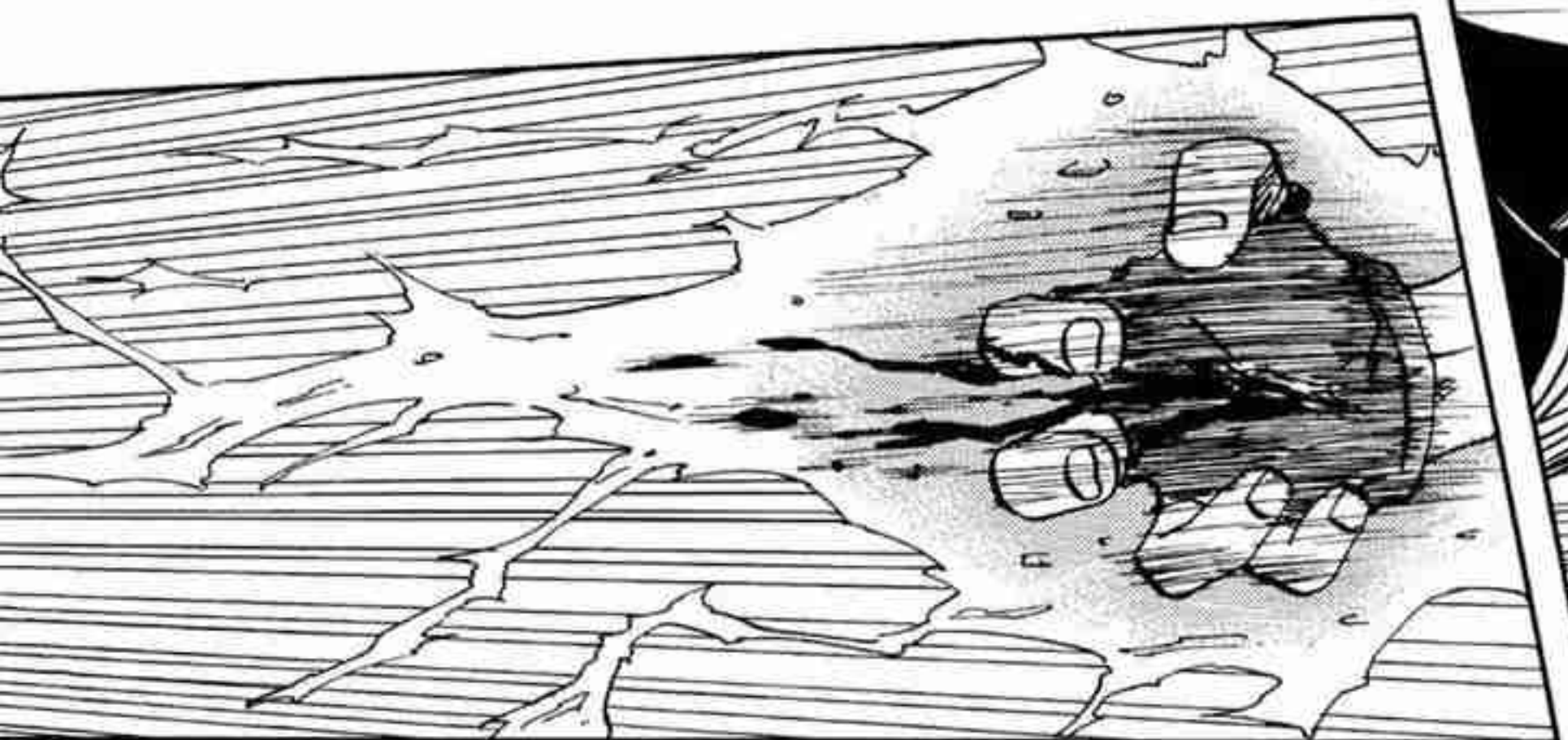
FWUP



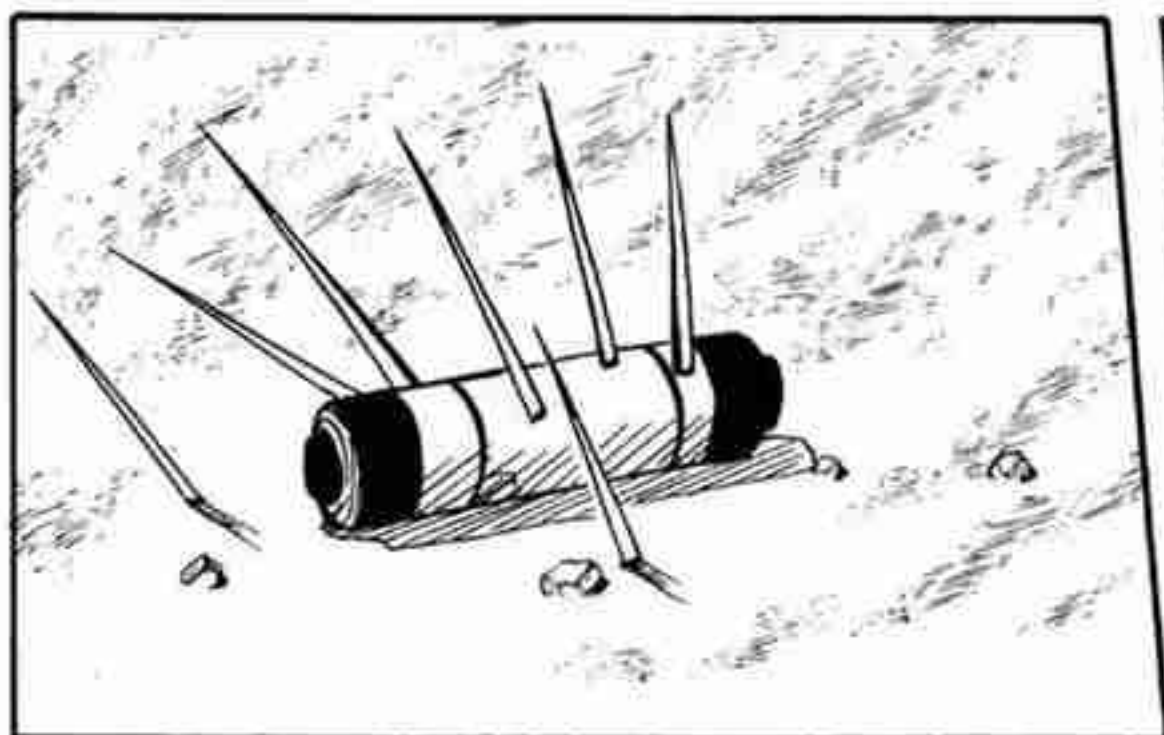














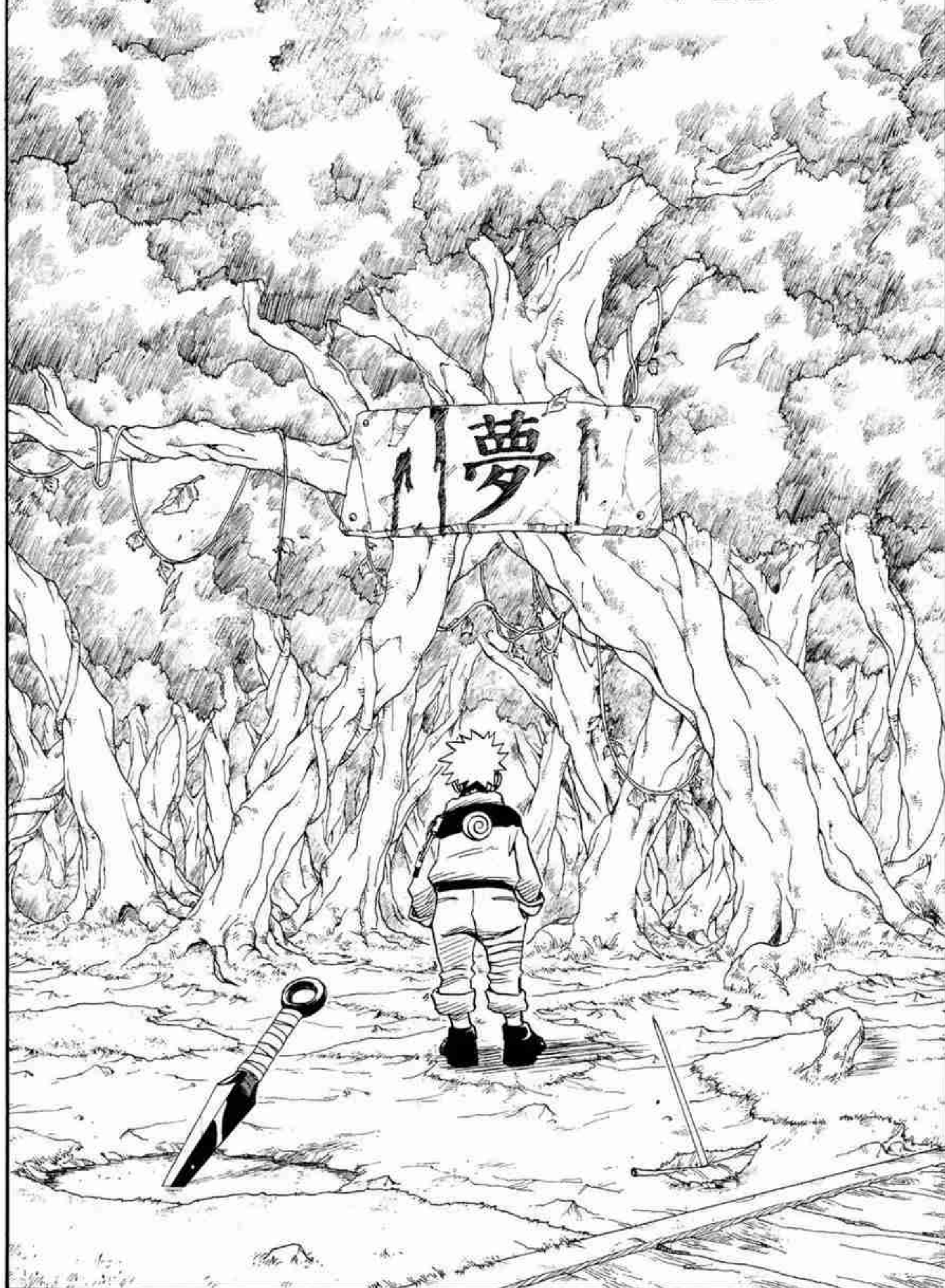


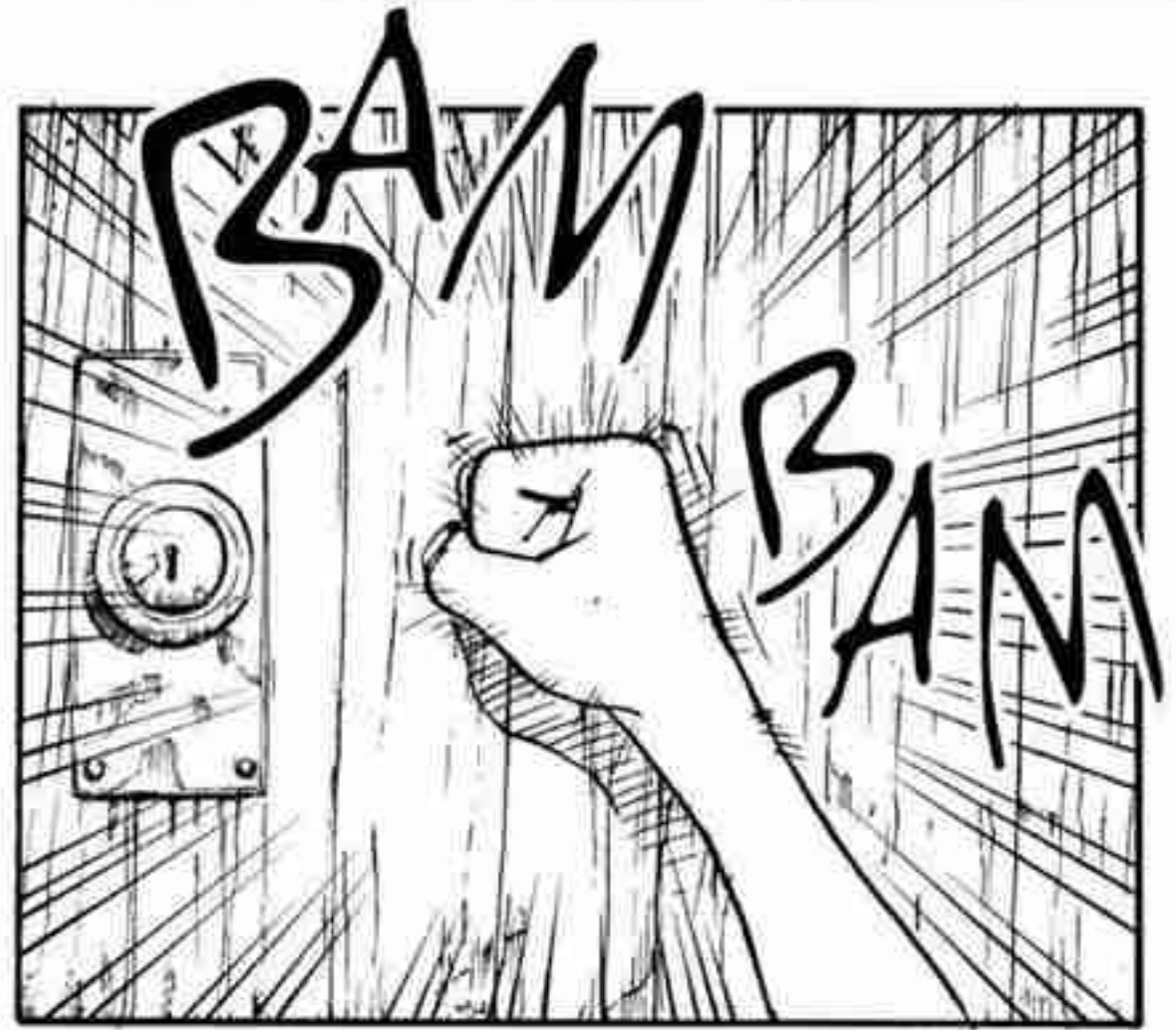
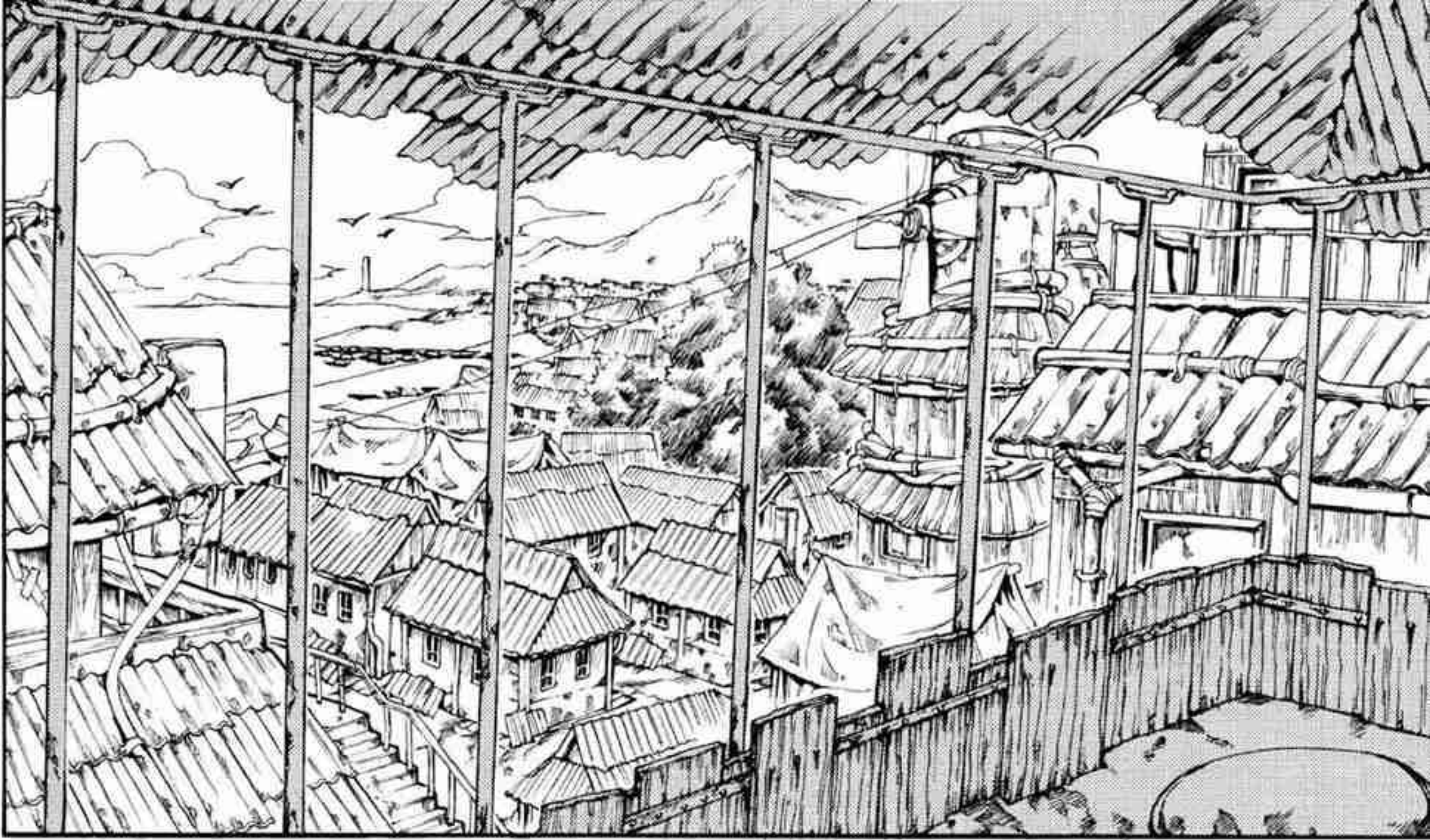




Number 31:

To Each His Own Struggle...





I NEED YOU
TO COME
WITH ME TO
THE BRIDGE!!!

IF WE STICK
TOGETHER,
THIS TIME
WE CAN BEAT
GATÔ AND HIS
WHOLE GANG!

NONE OF US WANTS ANY MORE LOSSES... ANYMORE REGRETS.

IF WE FIGHT, WE'LL BE THROWING AWAY A LOT OF LIVES.

WE'VE ALREADY SACRIFICED AND LOST SO MUCH.

!

YOUR FATHER...

..WAS A HERO. BUT HE'S GONE NOW.

...I HAVE TO FIGHT.

THAT'S WHY...

...I DON'T WANT ANY REGRETS EITHER.

...

...

...

...AND EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE...

...I LOVE MY MA, AND GRANDPA, AND YOU...

A MAN HAS TO LIVE HIS LIFE SO THAT HE DOESN'T END UP WITH ANY REGRETS...



THAT
I CAN'T
PROTECT
ANYONE BY
BEING
A BIG
CRYBABY.

AND I
UNDERSTAND
NOW...



ARE YOU
SURE
HE'LL BE
ALL RIGHT
LIKE THAT...
BY
HIMSELF?

LITTLE
INARI IS
GROWING
UP TO
BE A FINE
YOUNG MAN,
ISN'T HE...



BUT
THAT
DOESN'T
MEAN...!

HAVE TO.
NO ONE
IN THE
VILLAGE
WAS WILLING
TO GO
WITH ME.

WAIT!
YOU
CAN'T
GO TO
THE
BRIDGE
ALONE!



... BUT I
KNOW
HOW TO
FIGHT...

I MAY
BE
LITTLE...



YOU'RE
JUST
A LITTLE
BOY!



INARI,
WAIT!

KREEAK



'CAUSE
I'M
MY
DADDY'S
SON.



THE MIST'S
FADING...
I'M SEEING
THINGS
MORE
CLEARLY...

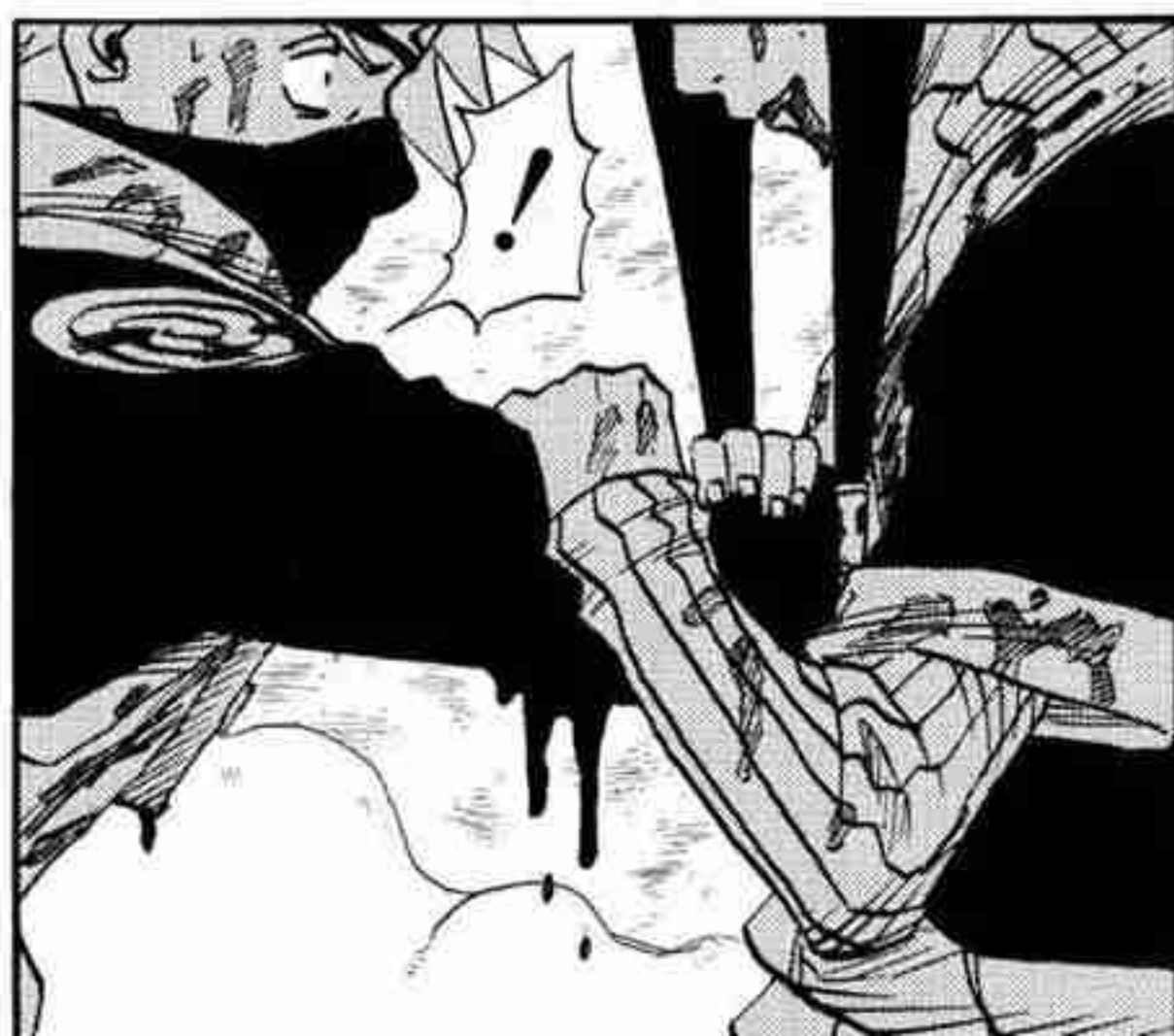
!



HAKU...

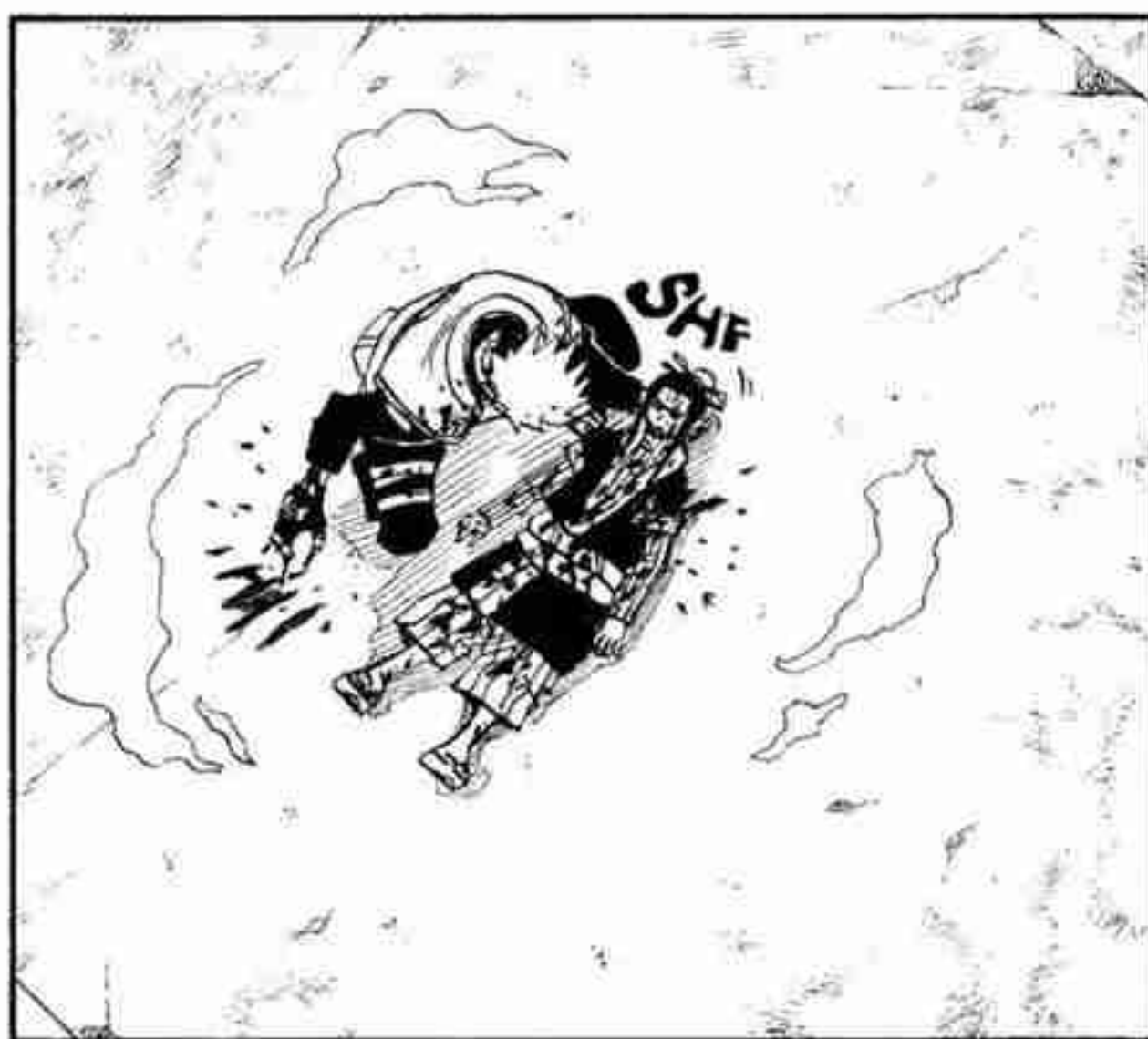
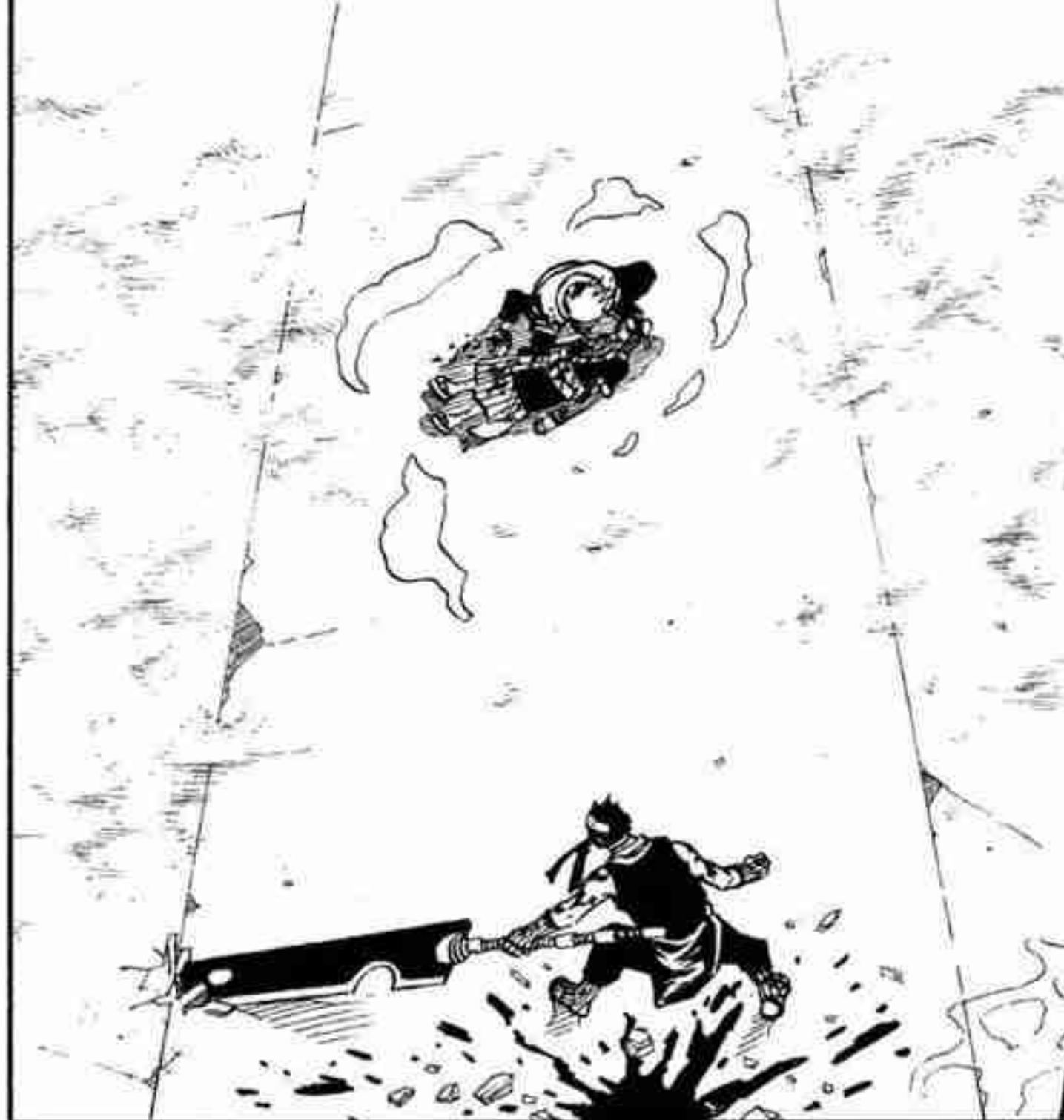
WHERE
IS
HE?!













...NARUTO...?



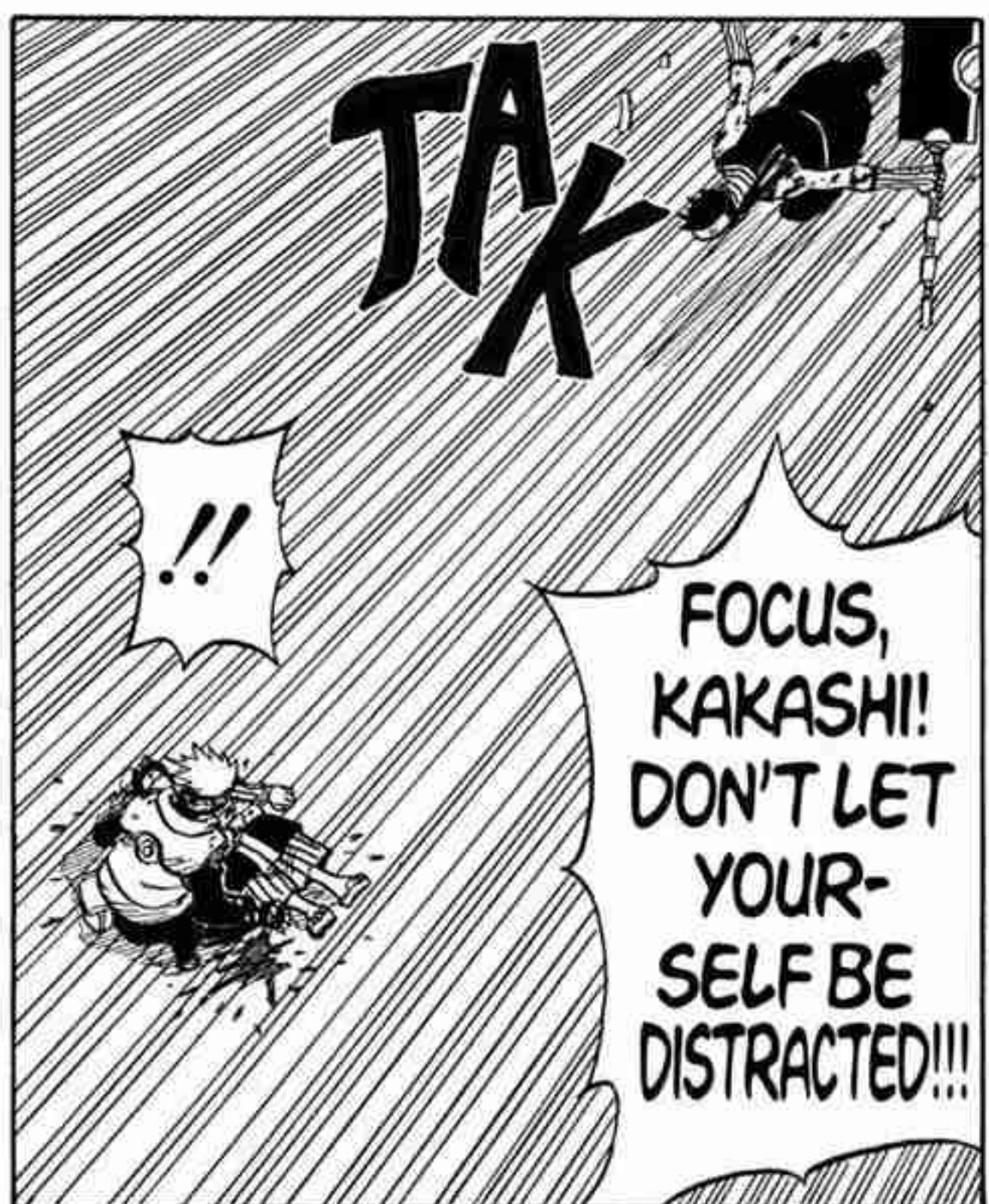
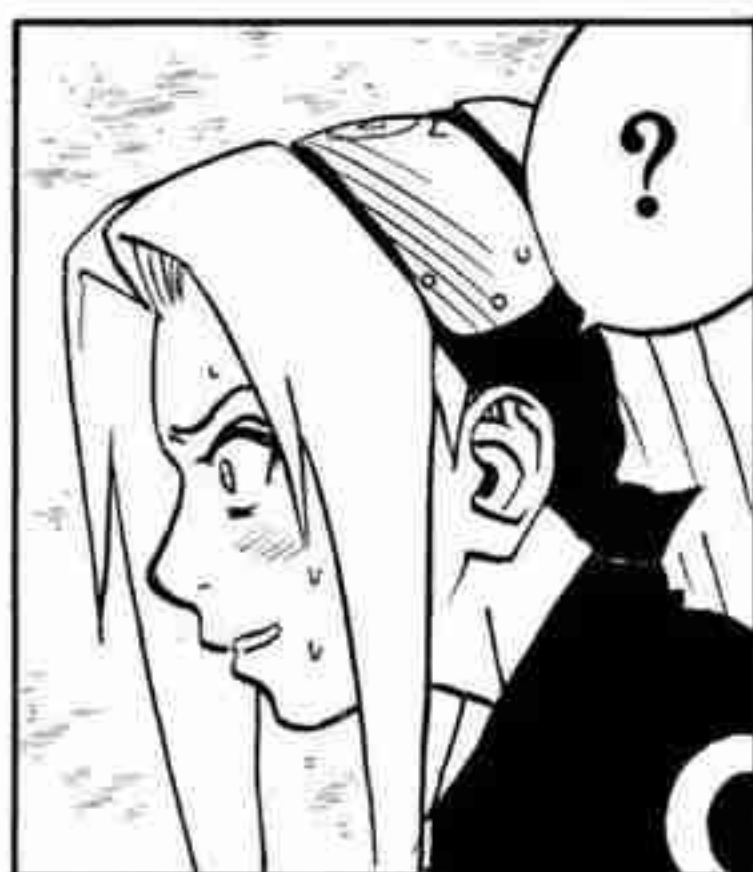
THIS
IS
MY
FIGHT!!



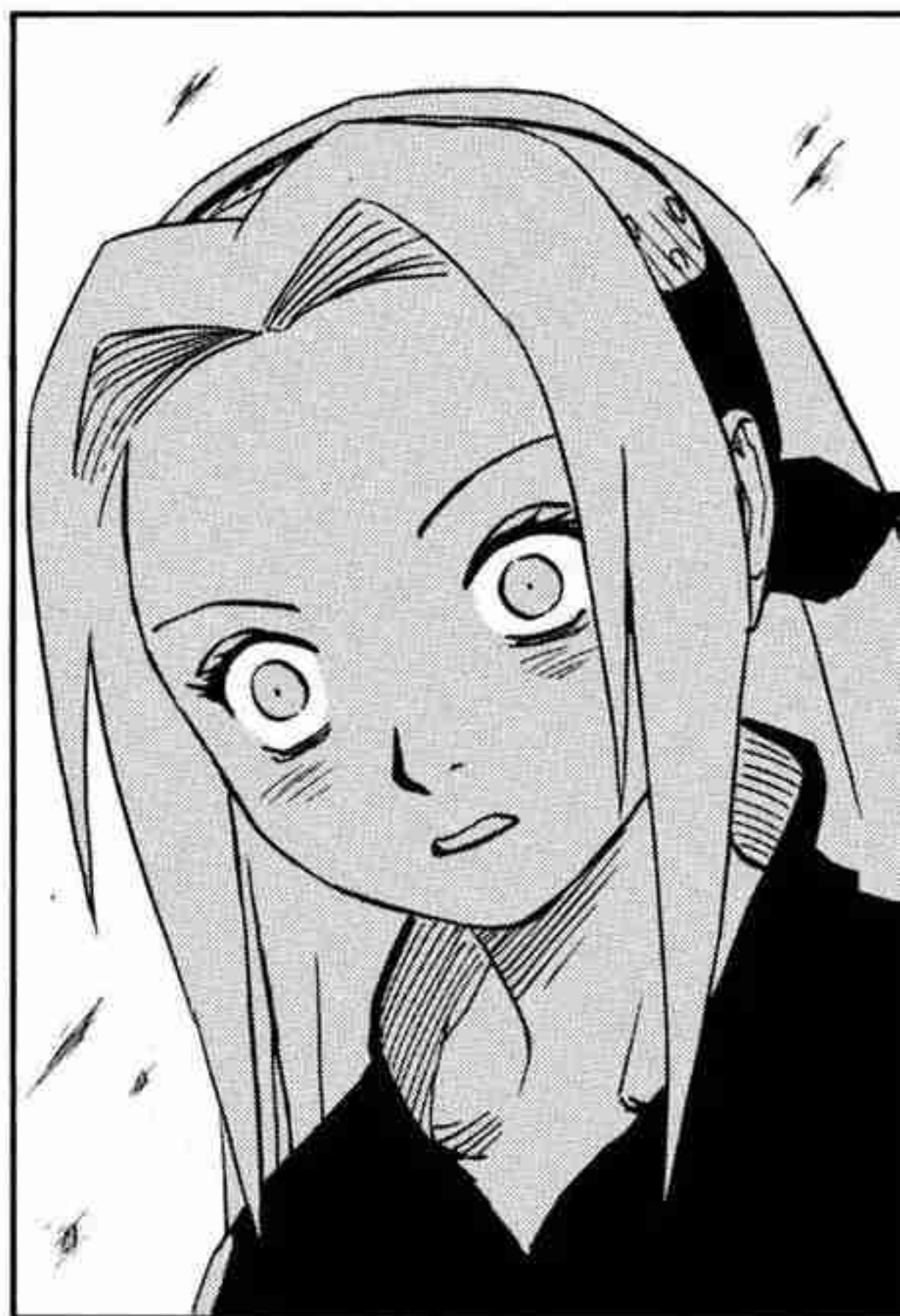
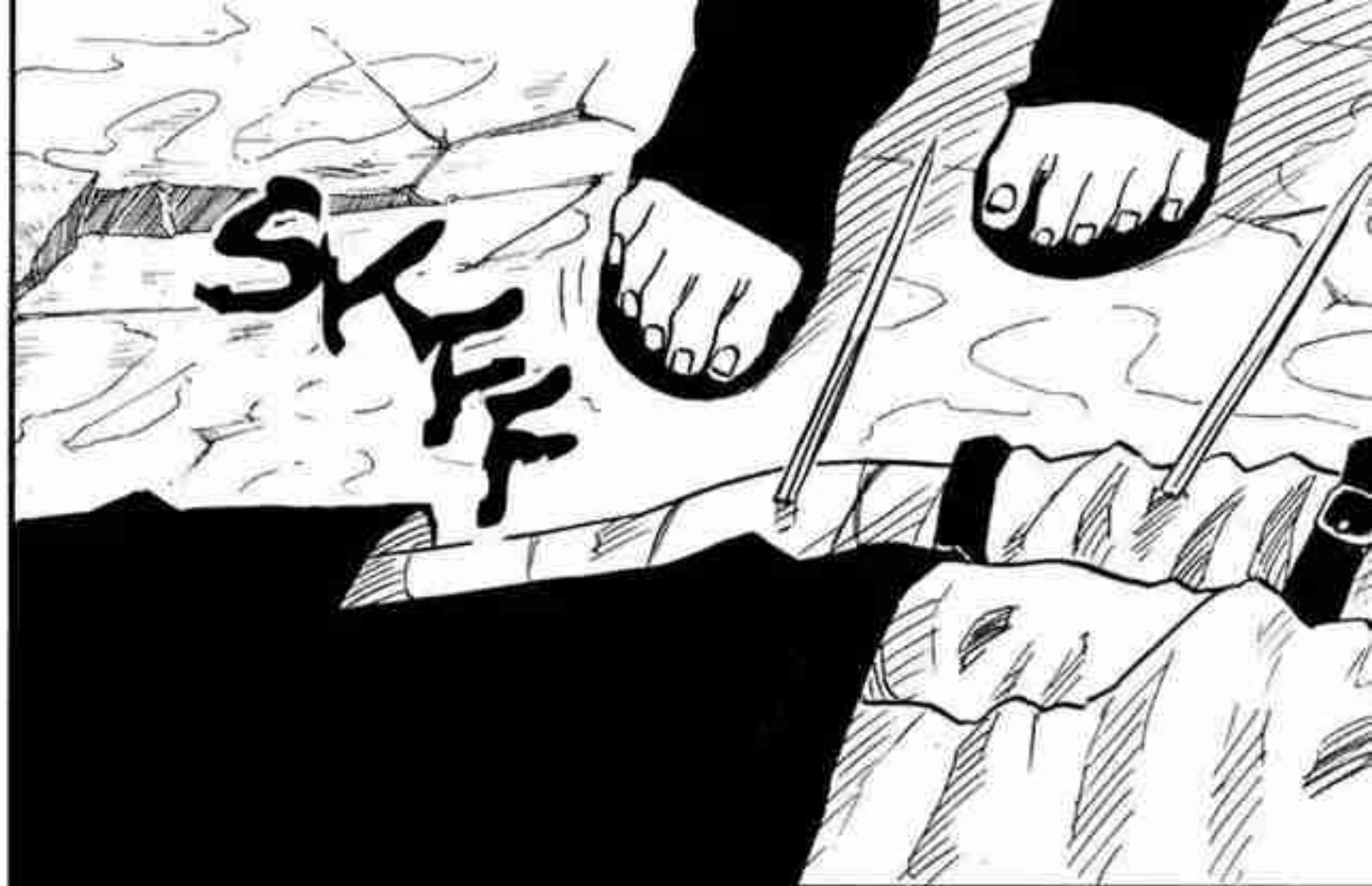
SAKURA!!



NARUTO--!!!
YOU'RE
ALIVE--!!









HE'S
SO
COLD.



... ALWAYS GOT
PERFECT
SCORES ON
ALL MY TESTS
IN SCHOOL.



DON'T
HOLD BACK
FOR MY SAKE.
THERE ARE
TIMES IT'S
WHEN RIGHT
TO GIVE IN
AND SHED
SOME GOOD
HONEST
TEARS.

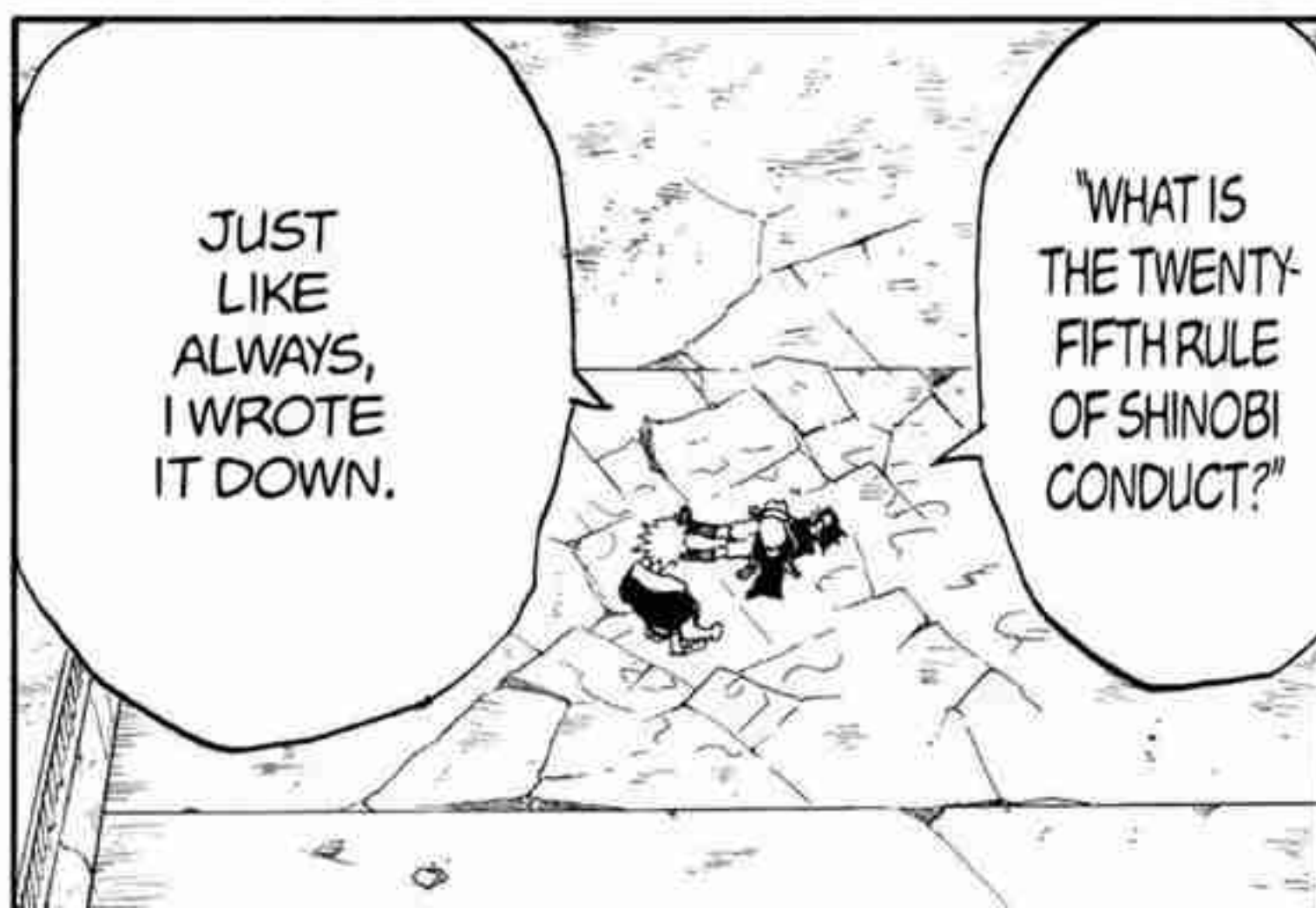


WE HAD A
TEST ONE DAY.
AND THE
QUESTION
WAS
...

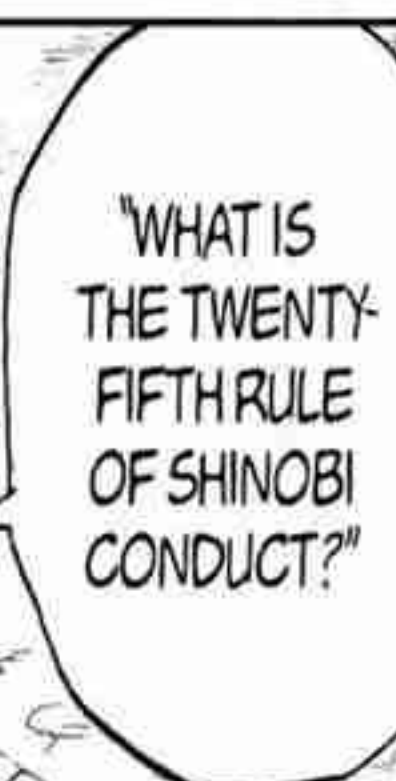
I MEMORIZED
EACH
AND EVERY
ONE OF
THE ONE
HUNDRED
RULES OF
CONDUCT
FOR NINJA
AND SHINOBI.
I USED TO WRITE
THEM OUT
WITH PRIDE.



?!



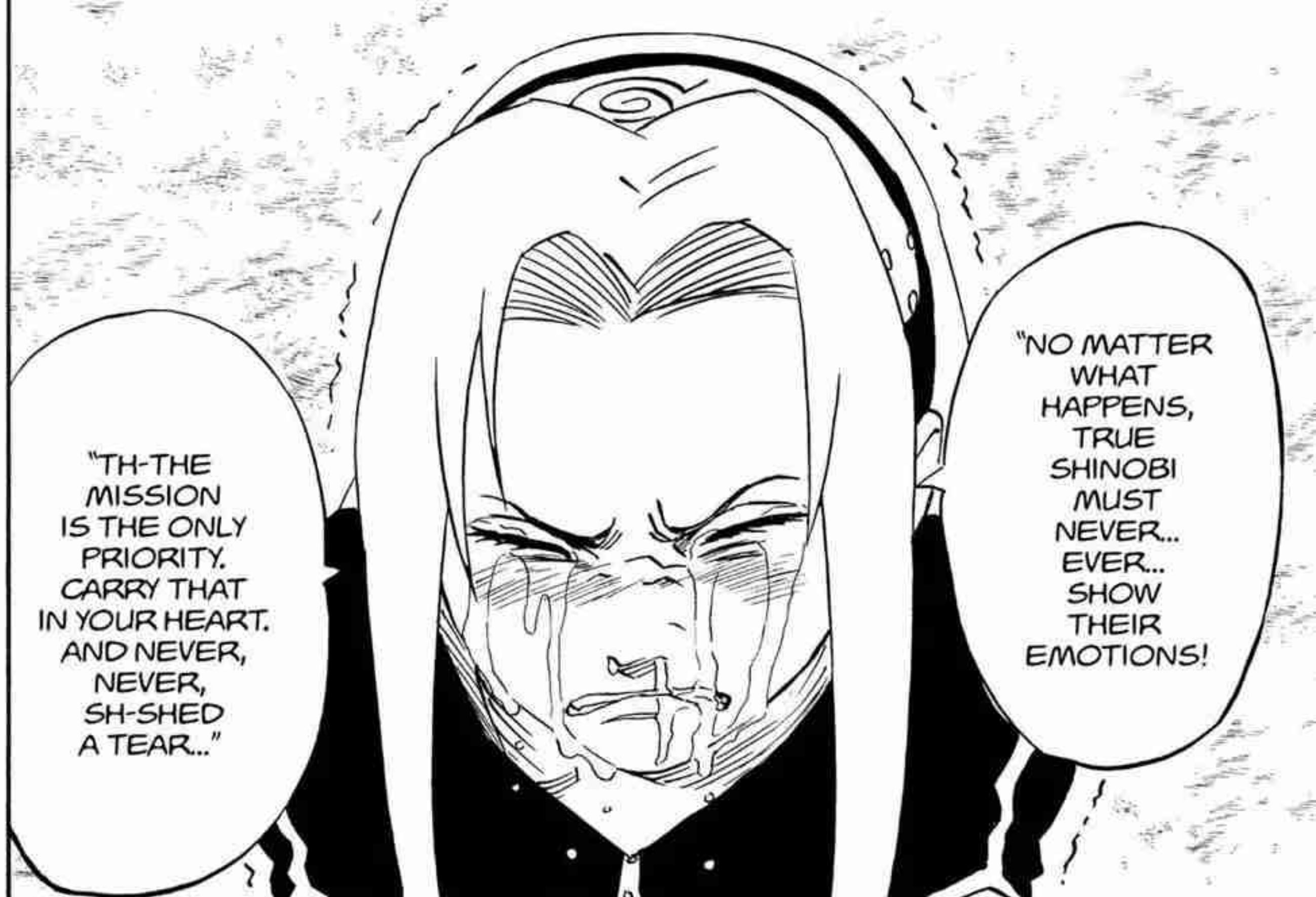
JUST
LIKE
ALWAYS,
I WROTE
IT DOWN.



"WHAT IS
THE TWENTY-
FIFTH RULE
OF SHINOBI
CONDUCT?"

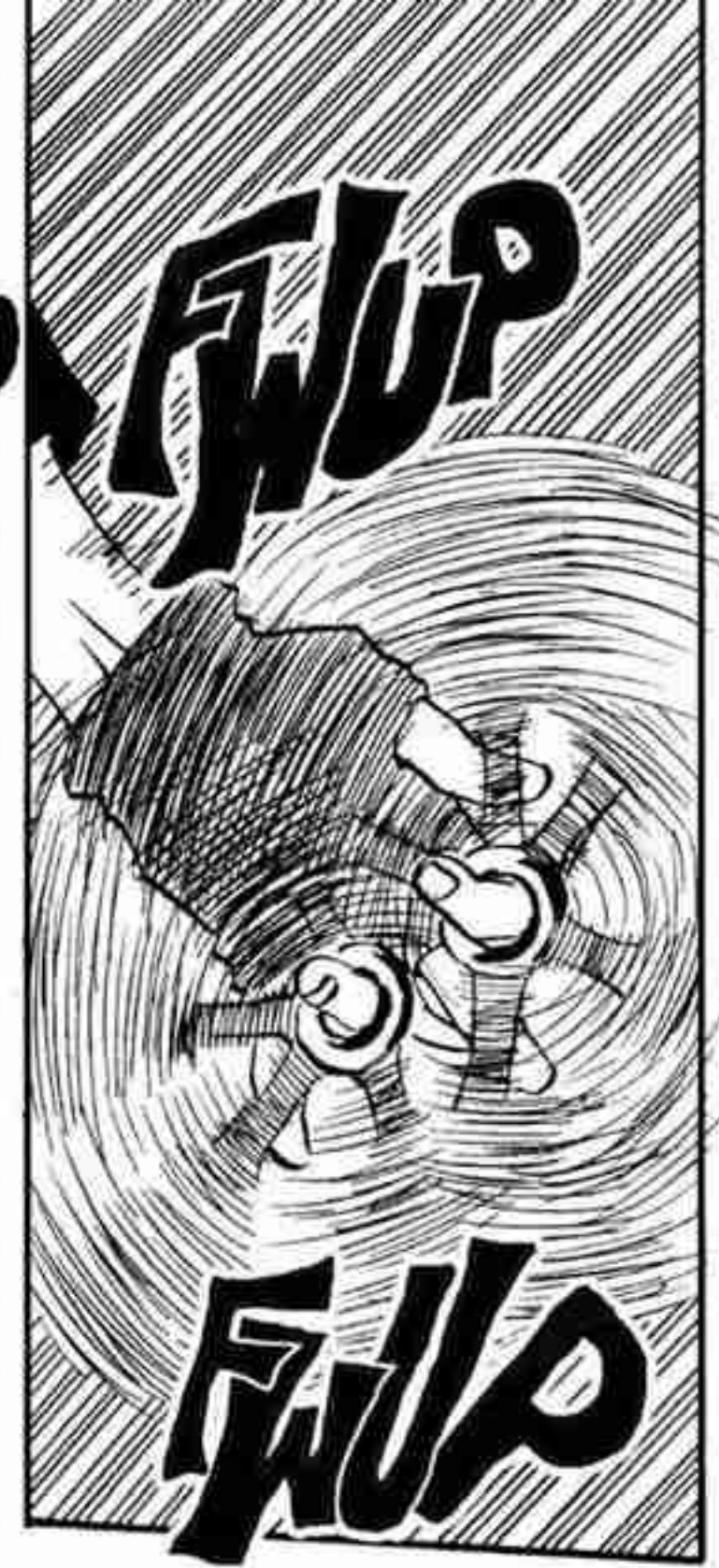


...!

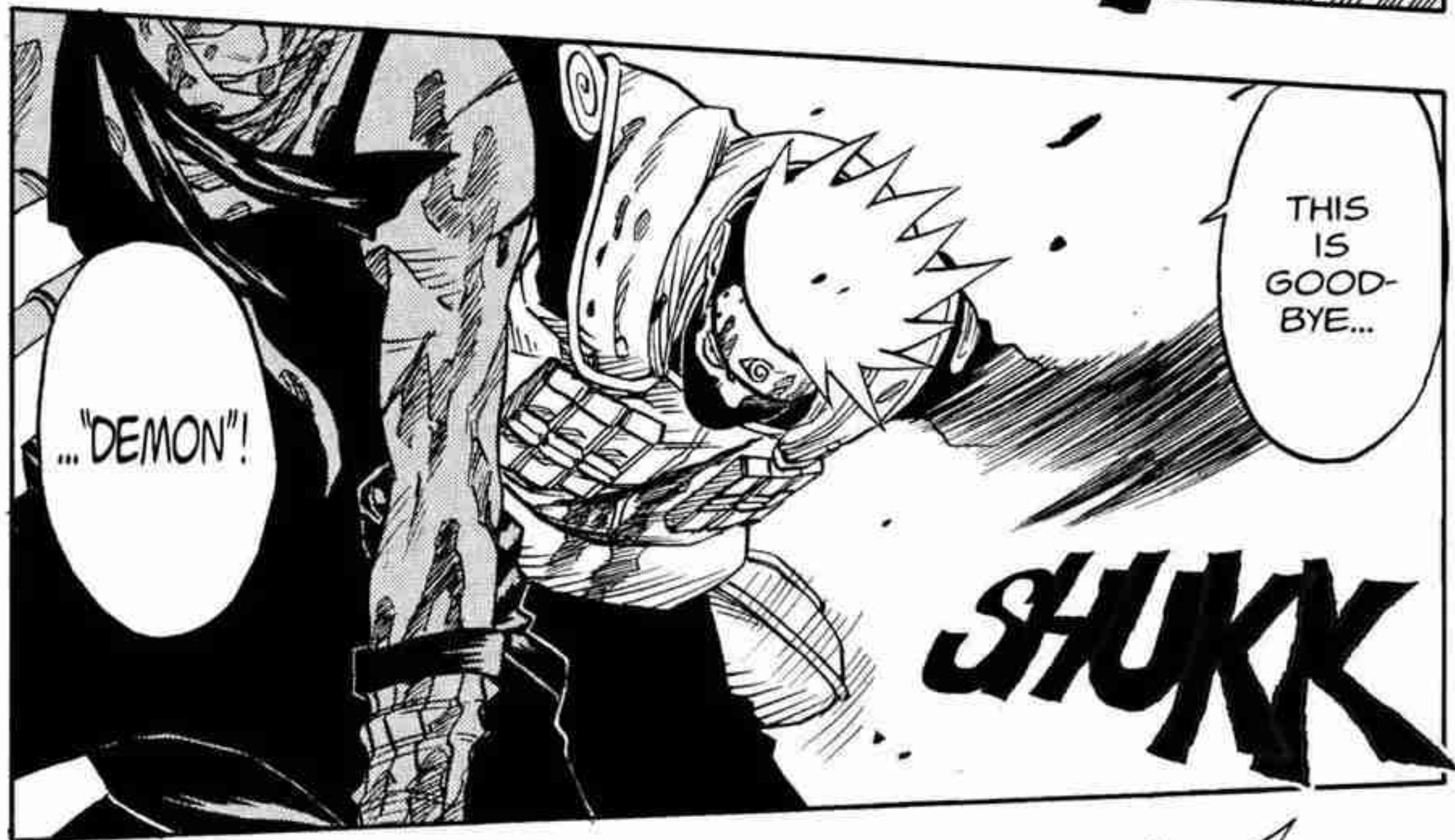








32: THE TOOLS CALLED SHINOBI

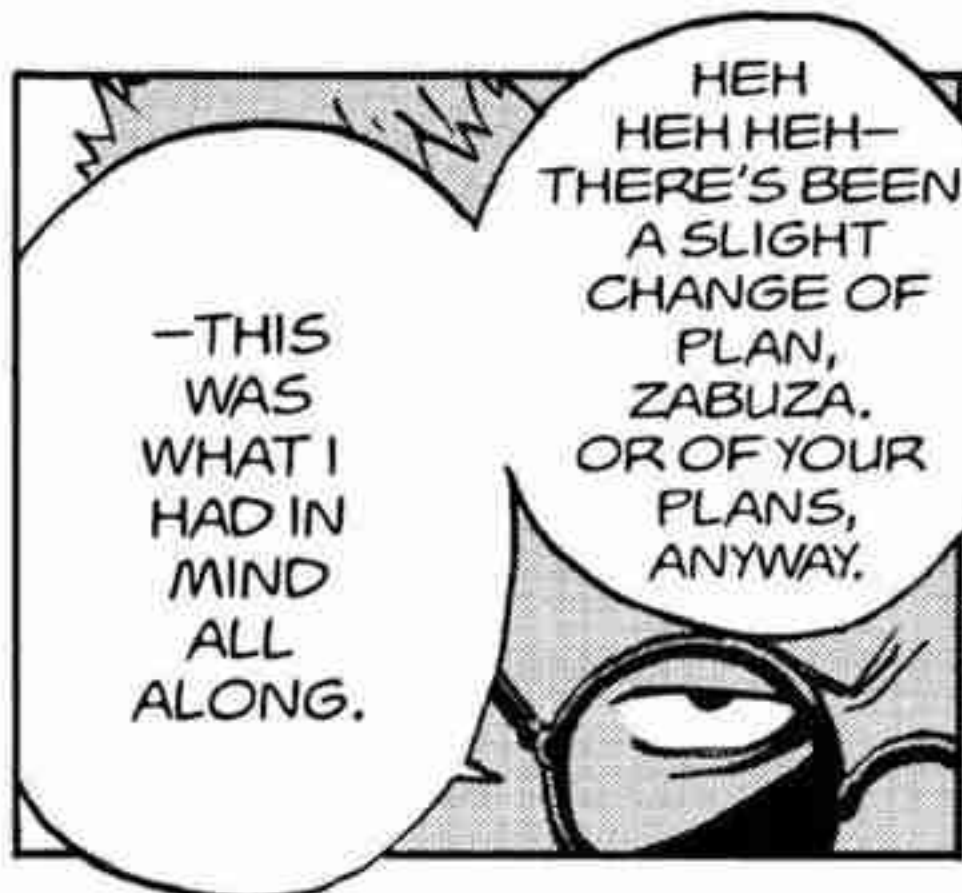




Number 328

The Tools Called Shinobi





ALL OF YOU
NINJA ARE SO
EAGER TO FIGHT
EACH OTHER.
ONCE YOU'VE
WORN EACH
OTHER DOWN,
COMMON THUGS
CAN FINISH
OFF THE REST.

IT'S SO MUCH
SIMPLER TO
HIRE *UKENIN*-
RENEGADES-
LIKE YOURSELF.
NO ONE CARES
WHAT I DO TO
YOUR KIND ONCE
THE JOB IS DONE.

...IT'S SUCH A BOTHER
HIRING A SKILLED SHINOBI
AFFILIATED WITH ONE
OF THE TOP VILLAGES.
IT'S EXPENSIVE... AND
THEY TEND TO HAVE
FRIENDS WHO OBJECT
WHEN I BETRAY AND
KILL THEM.

IT'S A
GREAT
BUSINESS
PLAN-
EFFICIENT
AND
INEXPENSIVE.



MORE
LIKE A
BABY
DEMON,
IF THAT.

HEH
HEH...
YOU'RE
NO
DEMON...

CALLING
YOURSELF
THE DEMON
OF KIRIGAKURE
IS JUST PLAIN
FALSE
ADVERTISING!

MY ONLY
MISTAKE
WAS HIRING
YOU IN THE
FIRST
PLACE.



THAT'S
SOME
CROWD!

WHO
THE
HECK
ARE
THEY?



THE SHAPE
YOU'RE IN,
WE'LL TAKE
YOU DOWN
WITHOUT
EVEN
BREAKING
A SWEAT!



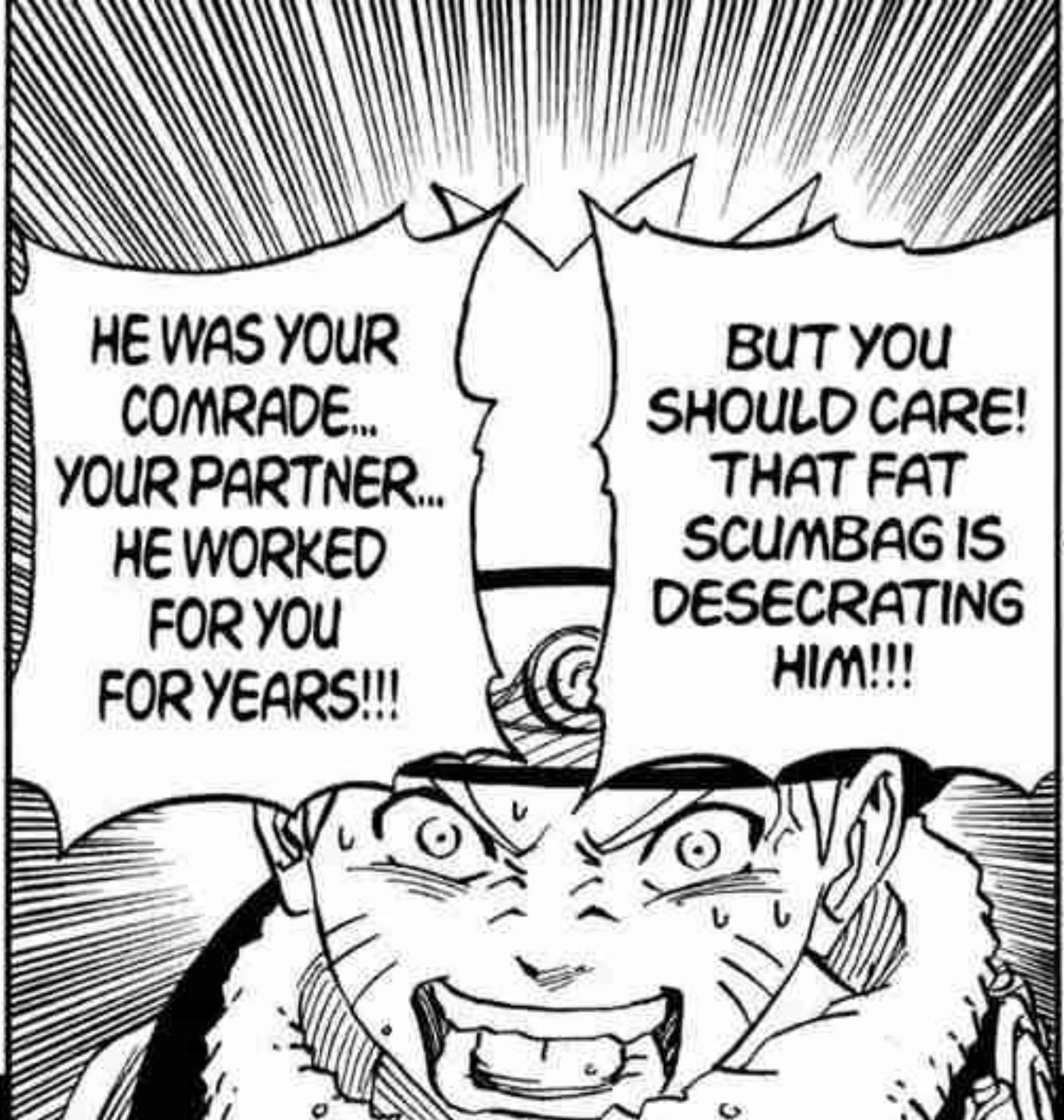


WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING, YOU CREEP?!



HEY, WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING?! HE WORKED FOR YOU! HE WAS PRACTICALLY YOUR SLAVE!!





HE WAS YOUR
COMRADE...
YOUR PARTNER...
HE WORKED
FOR YOU
FOR YEARS!!!

BUT YOU
SHOULD CARE!
THAT FAT
SCUMBAG IS
DESECRATING
HIM!!!



!!

HAKU
IS
DEAD.

LIKE
WHAT?

BUT...



I DIDN'T
VALUE HAKU
FOR HIMSELF...
BUT FOR
THE TAIN'T
HIS BLOOD
CARRIED...
AND FOR WHAT
HIS TALENTS
COULD DO
FOR ME.

I
APOLOGIZE
FOR
NOTHING.

...GATŌ'S
BEEN
USING
ME...
AND I
USED HAKU.

WEREN'T
YOU
LISTENING?
IT'S A
SHINOBI'S
LOT.
ALL OF US
ARE EITHER
USERS,
OR TOOLS...
OR BOTH.

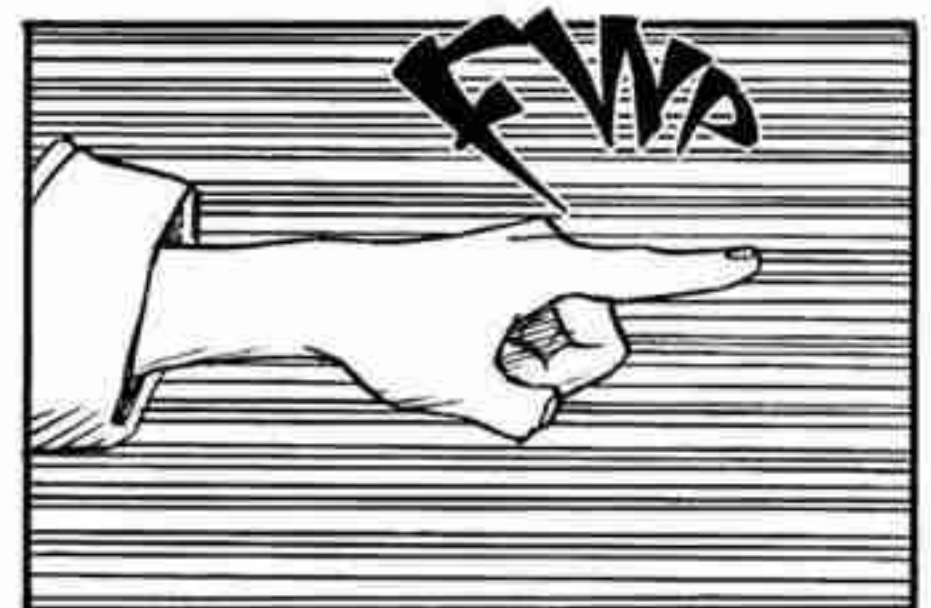


STOP IT,
NARUTO!
LEAVE
HIM ALONE.
OUR
QUARREL
IS OVER.

BESIDES
WHICH...

YOU...

DO
YOU
REALLY
MEAN
THAT?





...THEY
TRULY
CAN
BECOME...
AS
STRONG
AS
THEY
MUST
BE!

WHEN
PEOPLE
ARE
PROTECTING
SOMETHING
TRULY
PRECIOUS
TO
THEM...



HE
WAS
DEVOTED
TO
YOU!!

DO YOU
HAVE
ANYONE
SPECIAL
IN YOUR
LIFE?



I...FIND IT
DIFFICULT
TO EMBRACE
THE FULL
SHINOBI
PHILOSOPHY.



BUT YOU THINK
THAT'S JUST NOTHING,
THAT HE WAS NOTHING.
YOU DON'T FEEL A THING!



...



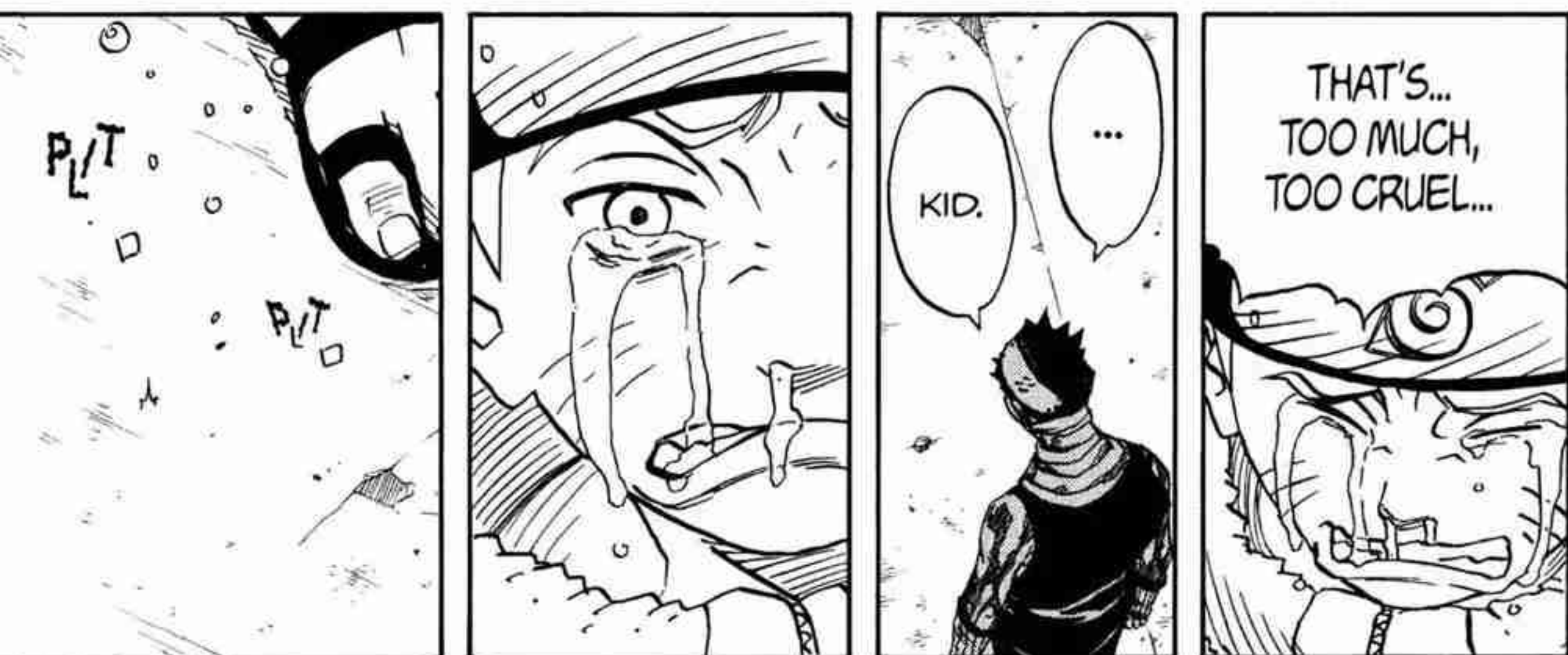
IS THAT
HOW YOU GET...
WHEN YOUR
POWERS
ARE AS STRONG
AS YOURS ARE?



I'M
WILLING
TO DO
WHATEVER
IT TAKES...
TO FULFILL
THAT
PERSON'S
DREAMS...
TO
THAT
END, I
WILL
BECOME
A TRUE
SHINOBI...



ARE
YOU
REALLY
THAT
HEARTLESS?





WHAT
HAKU DID...
WAS NOT
JUST FOR
ME.

WHILE WE
FOUGHT,
HE BROKE
HIS HEART...
OVER YOU...
AND YOUR
FRIENDS.
THAT'S
THE TRUTH.

....!

KID...

YOU'RE
RIGHT,
YOU
KNOW.

...I'M GLAD
MY LAST
BATTLE...
WAS
AGAINST
YOU...BOY.

?!
...HUH?

HE
WAS
TOO
KIND...
TOO
GENTLE.

WOULD
YOU
LEND
ME
YOUR
KUNAI
KNIFE?

...

HUNH?
UH...

SURE.

AND
I'VE
LOST...
EVERYTHING.

SAY WHAT WE
WILL, DO WHAT
WE WILL.
IN THE END,
WE SHINOBI ARE
STILL JUST
PEOPLE AFTER
ALL... WITH
FEELINGS ALL-
TOO-HUMAN.



WHAT?!



LET'S
GO!



YOU
DON'T
STAND
A
CHANCE!

EVEN IF
YOU'RE
A NINJA,
YOU'RE
HALF-DEAD,
AGAINST
ALL OF US!



THAT'S
ENOUGH!
WHAT
ARE YOU
WAITING
FOR?
KILL
ALL OF
THEM!





WHY
WON'T
YOU
DIE?!





HEH...



WH-
WHAT
ARE
YOU
BABBLING
ABOUT?

UGH...

I...
HAVE NO
INTENTION...
OF GOING
TO THE
SAME
PLACE...
AS HAKU...



I-IF YOU'RE IN
SUCH A HURRY...
TO BE REUNITED
WITH YOUR
LITTLE FRIEND...
GO ALONE!



...TO
HELL!!

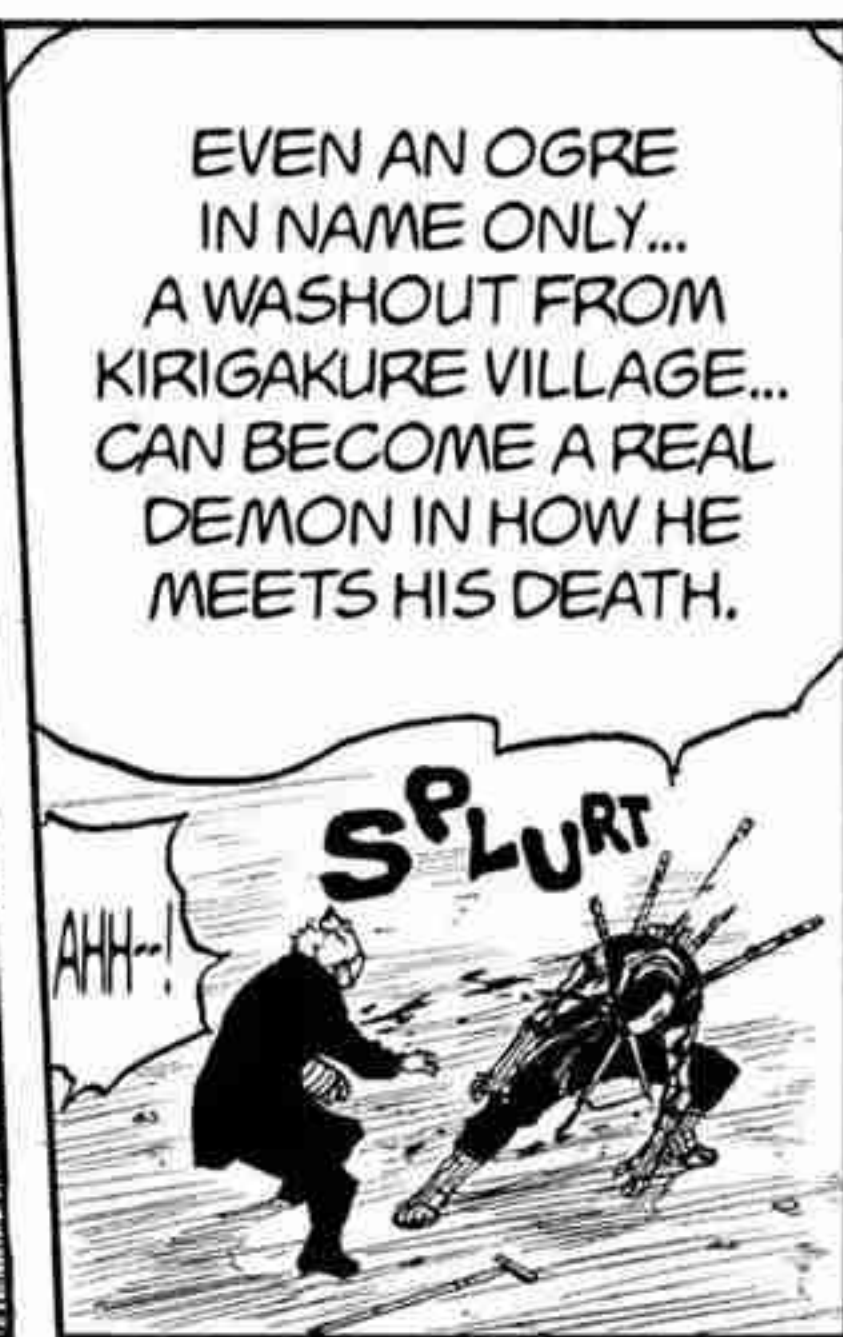
...I'M
TAKING
YOU
WITH
ME...



ONCE WE'RE IN HELL,
I CAN TAKE MY TIME,
AND SHOW YOU OVER...
AND OVER...
WHO IS, OR IS NOT,
"A BABY DEMON"!



AIEEE...



EVEN AN OGRE
IN NAME ONLY...
A WASHOUT FROM
KIRIGAKURE VILLAGE...
CAN BECOME A REAL
DEMON IN HOW HE
MEETS HIS DEATH.

SPLURT

AHH...





EEK!!



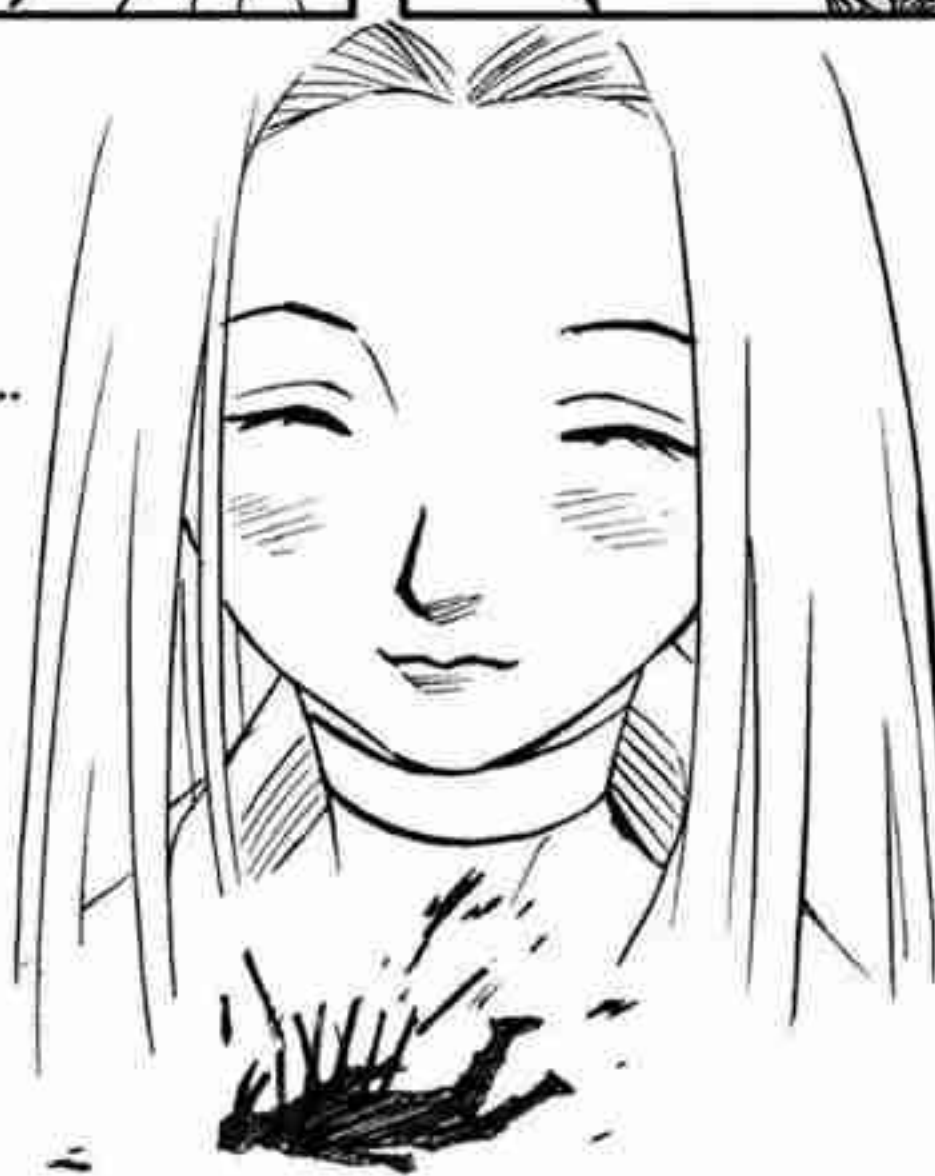
PLEASE...
KEEP
ME
BESIDE
YOU...



STUMBLE

THANKS
FOR
EVERYTHING...

AND
I'M
SORRY...



IT'S...
GOODBYE
NOW,
HAKU...

KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S THIRD MANGA REJECT SPECIAL!



ONCE AGAIN, THE ROUGH SKETCH TO THE LEFT IS FROM ANOTHER REJECTED MANGA. IT WAS A BASEBALL MANGA, TITLED SIMPLY "BASEBALL KING." I PLAYED BASEBALL MYSELF, BACK IN MY STUDENT DAYS, SO I (MAYBE FOOLISHLY) THOUGHT I WOULD TRY MY HAND AT A BASEBALL STORY.

DURING THIS PERIOD, I WAS IN A SITUATION WHERE, NO MATTER HOW MANY CONCEPTS FOR ADVENTURE MANGA I SKETCHED OUT, I DIDN'T GET ANY GREEN LIGHTS, SO I THOUGHT I SHOULD GO FOR A SPORTS THEME.

BUT WHEN I ACTUALLY TRIED TO DRAW ONE, PERHAPS BECAUSE I WAS WRITING FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, IT BECAME A MORE REALISTIC WORK THAN I HAD INTENDED.

THE REASON IT FAILED WAS THAT IT WAS TOO SERIOUS FOR A SHONEN PUBLICATION. IT WASN'T ENTERTAINMENT.

HOWEVER, "BASEBALL KING" ACTUALLY STILL HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART. I SOMETIMES FIND MYSELF THINKING, "THAT WAS SO FUNNY... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S A REJECT, DARN IT...!"



33: THE BRIDGE OF THE HERO!!



THIS WAS
THE END
OF A MAN
WHO LIVED
FULL OUT.

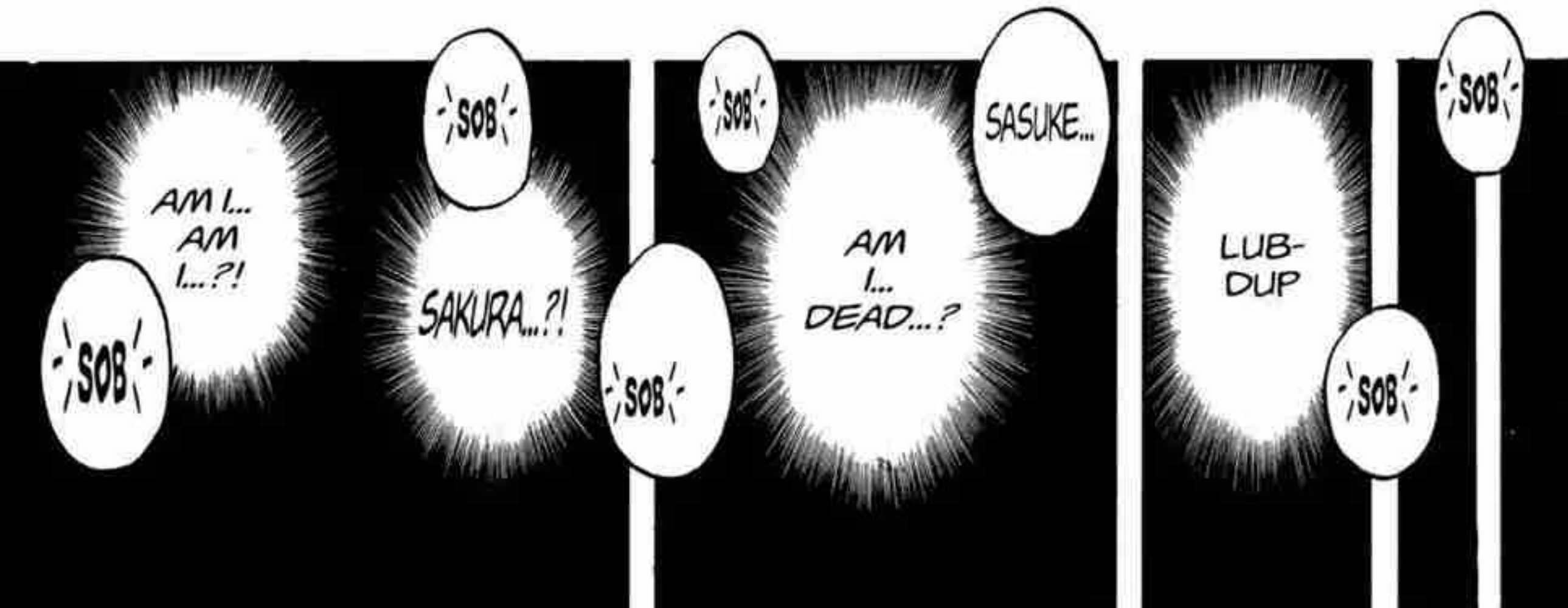


DON'T
LOOK
AWAY.



YEAH...

...



-SOB-

AM I...
AM
I...?!

SAKURA...?!

-SOB-

-SOB-

AM
I...
DEAD...?

SASUKE...

LUB-
DUP

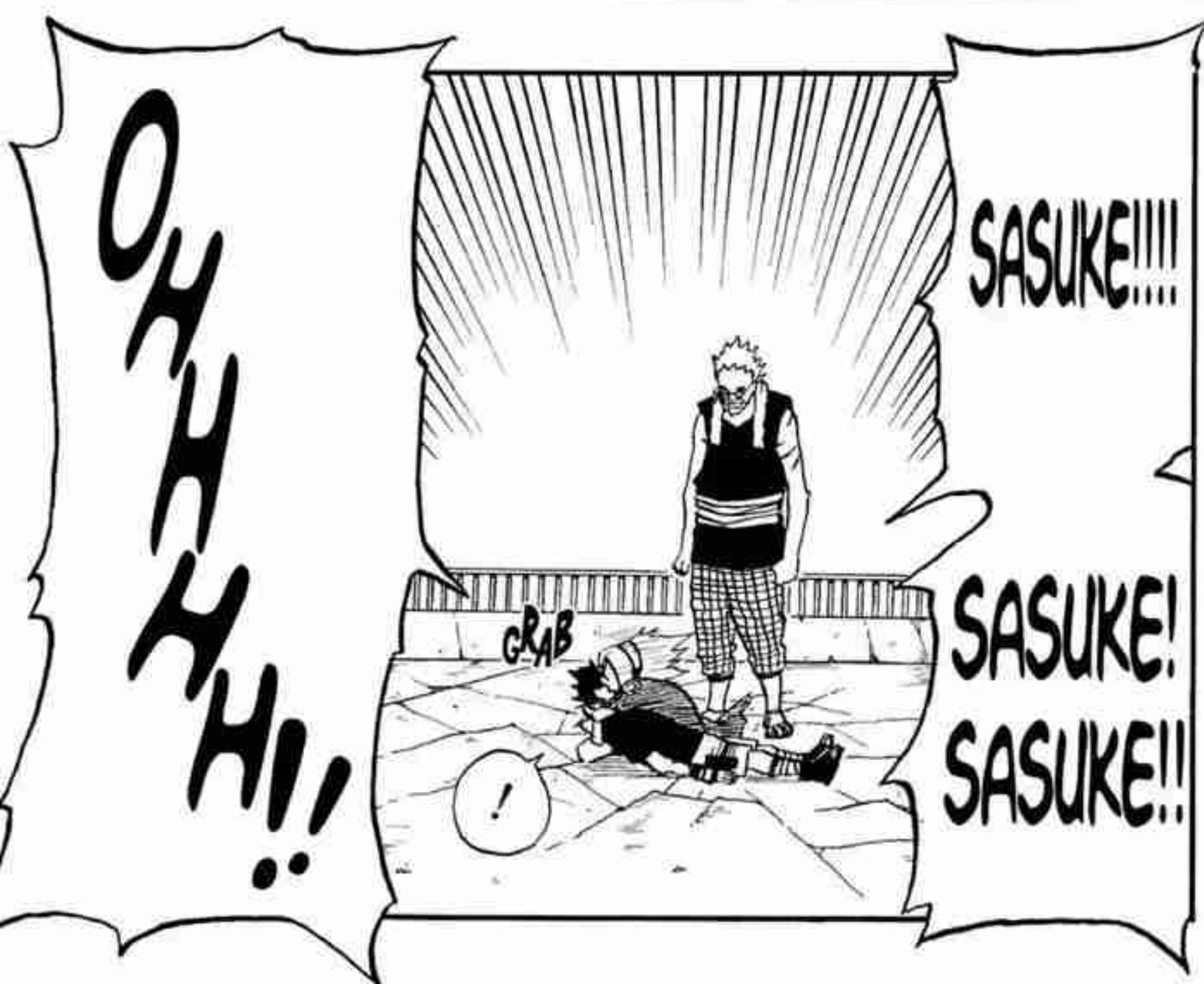
-SOB-

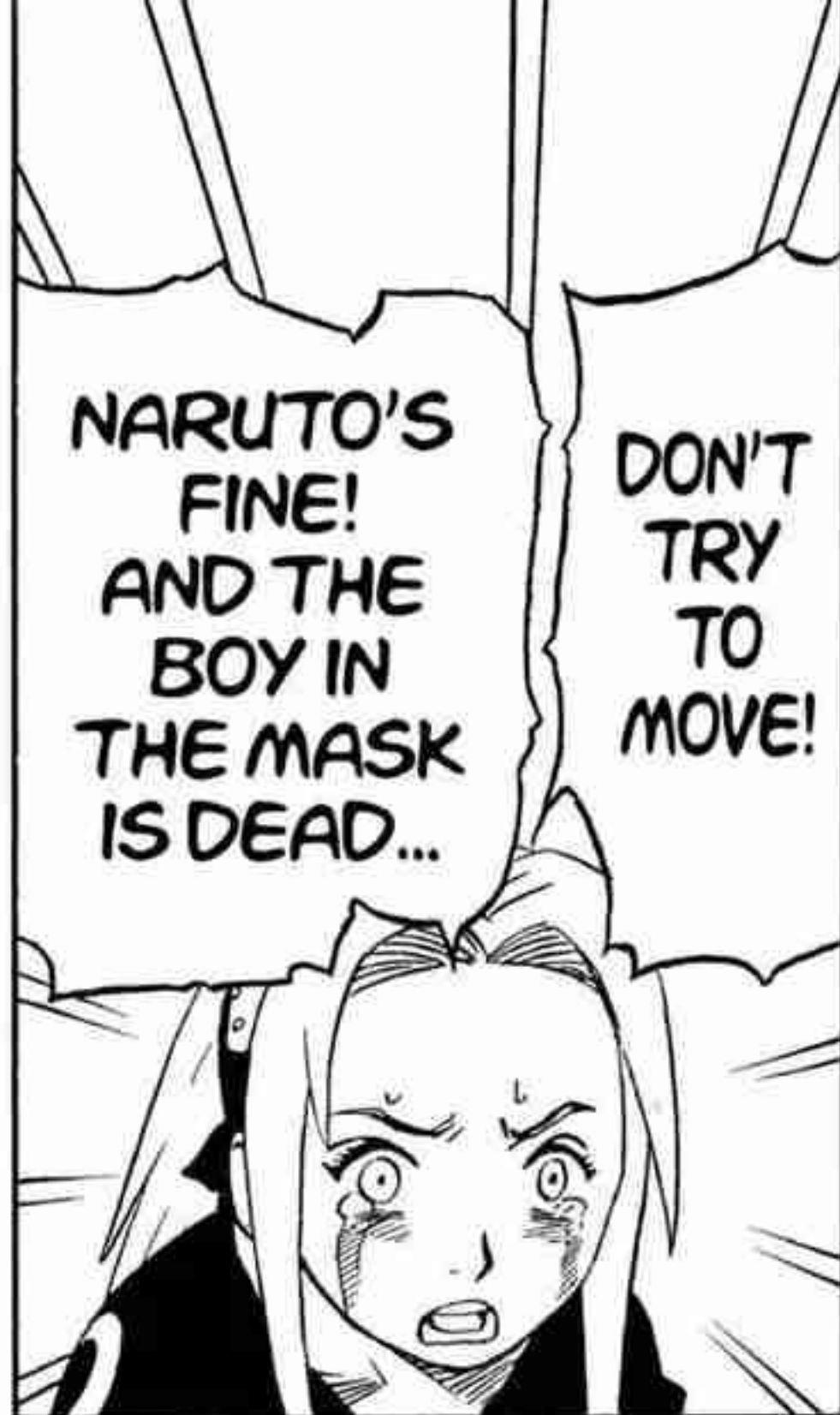
-SOB-



Number 33: The Bridge of the Heron!!

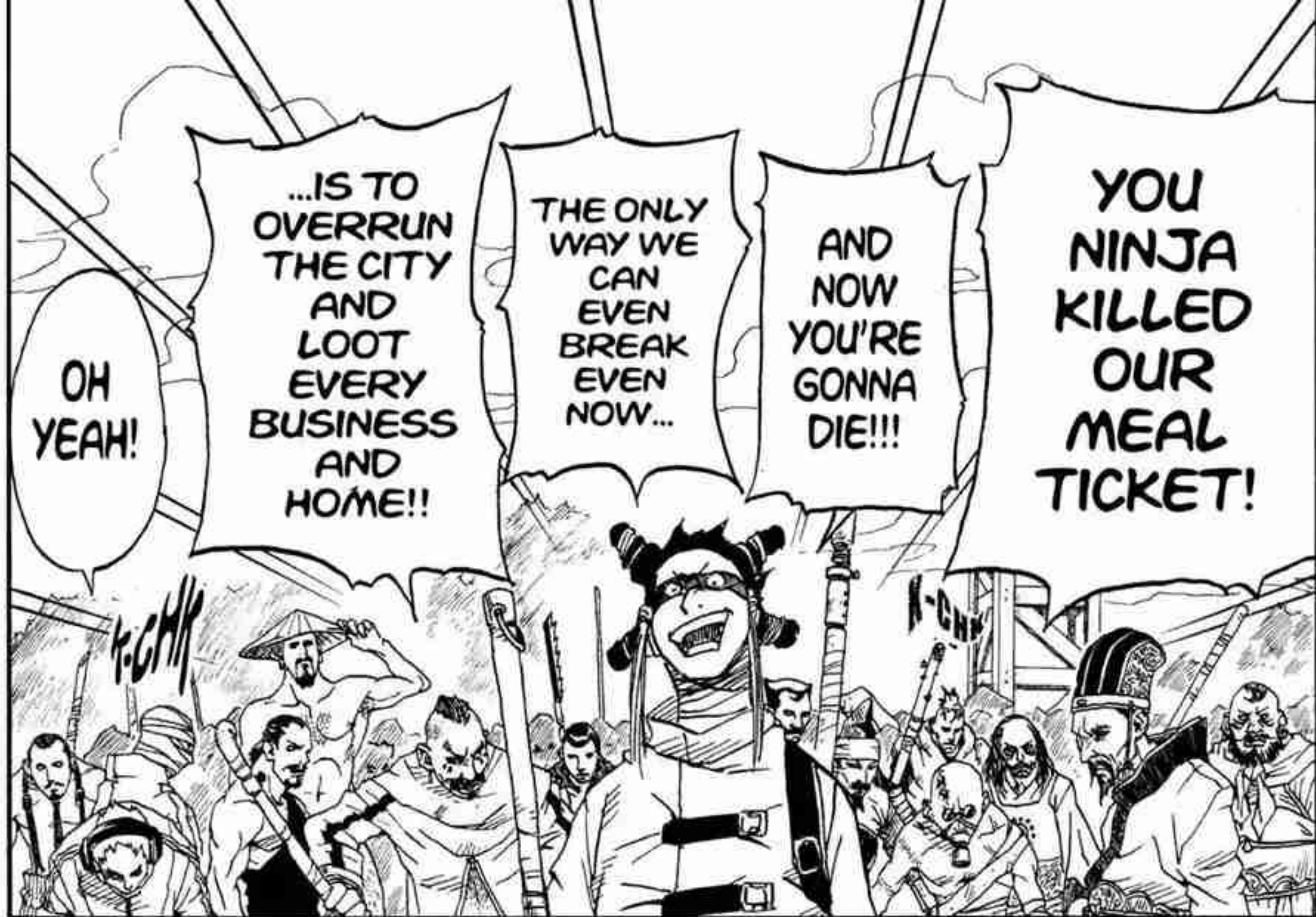












OH
YEAH!

...IS TO
OVERRUN
THE CITY
AND
LOOT
EVERY
BUSINESS
AND
HOME!!

THE ONLY
WAY WE
CAN
EVEN
BREAK
EVEN
NOW...

AND
NOW
YOU'RE
GONNA
DIE!!!

YOU
NINJA
KILLED
OUR
MEAL
TICKET!



MASTER KAKASHI-
ISN'T THERE
SOME TECHNIQUE
WE CAN USE TO
TAKE THEM ALL
DOWN AT ONCE?

UHHH...
THIS
ISN'T
GOOD.

I'M AFRAID ...
WITH THE LIGHTNING
BLADE, THE ILLUSIONS
AND CONJURATIONS...
FOR THE MOMENT,
I'VE EXHAUSTED
MY CHAKRA.

CHARGE

LET'S
GO!



!?



HEY--!

SKID

STEP

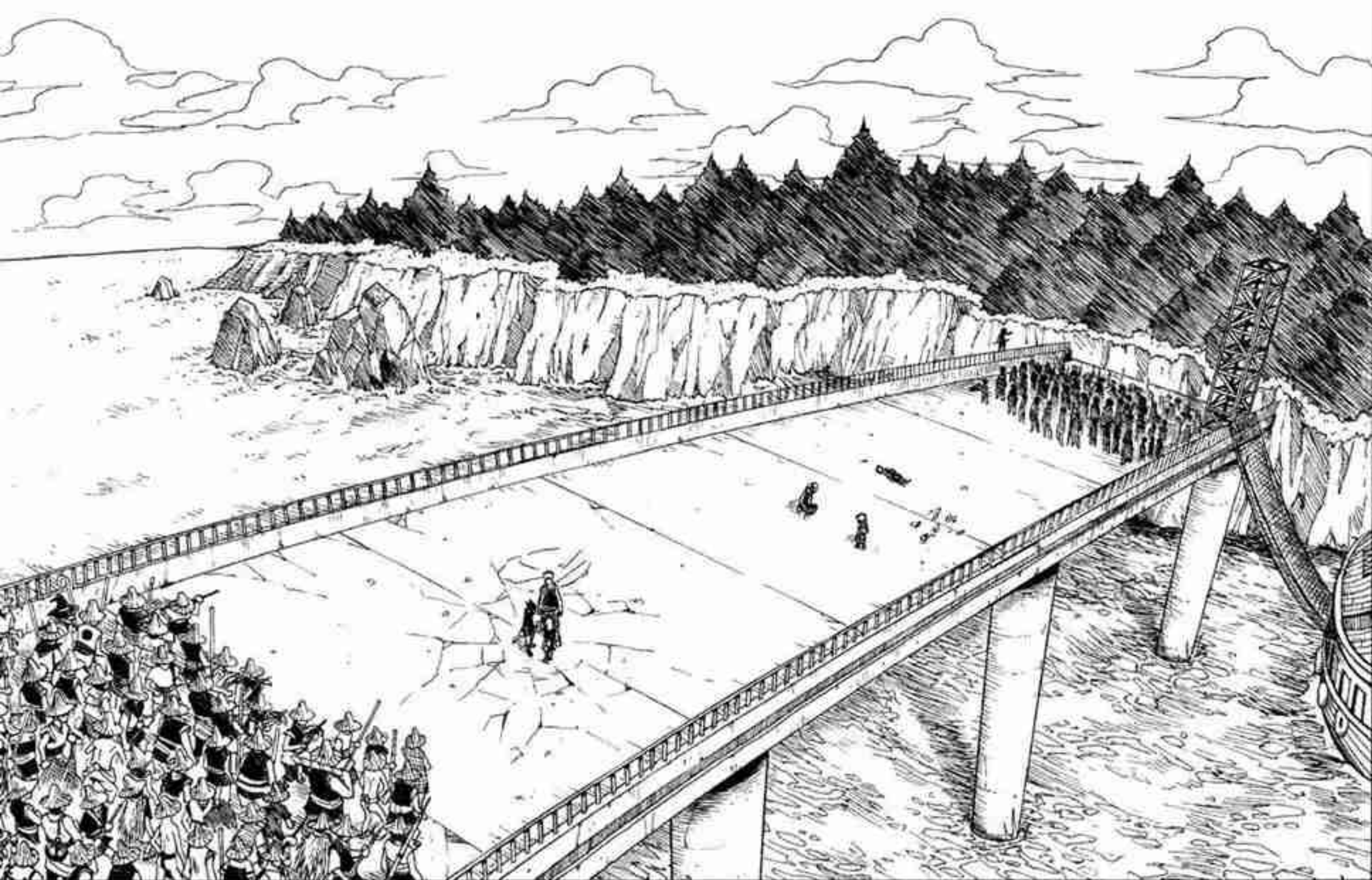
STUMBLE

THUCK

Swoop

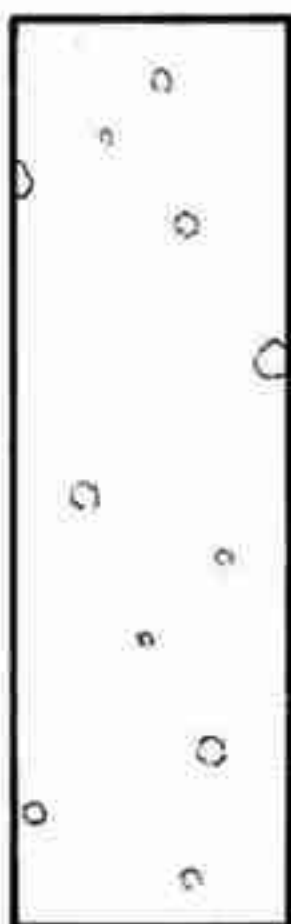
STOP
WHERE
YOU
ARE.

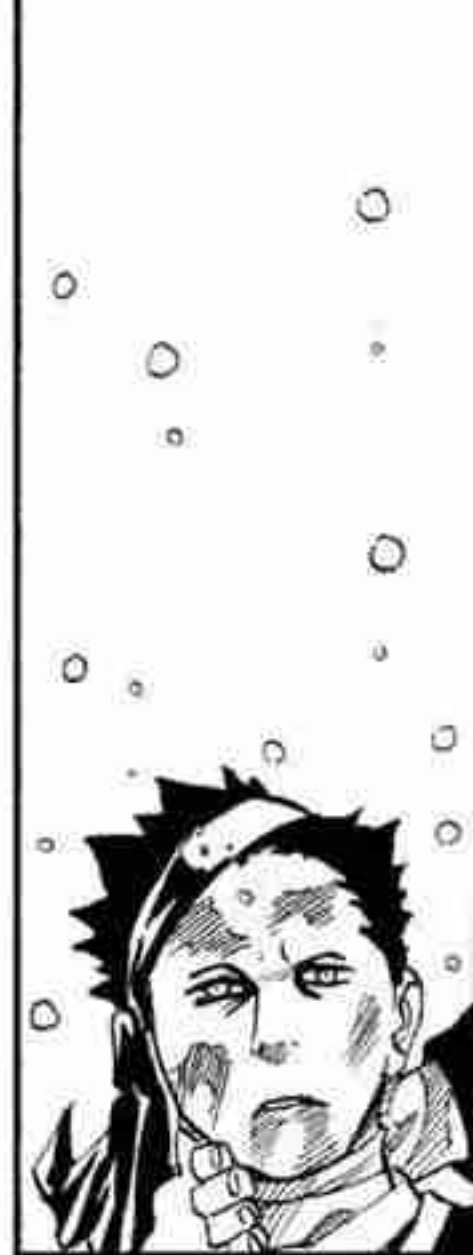






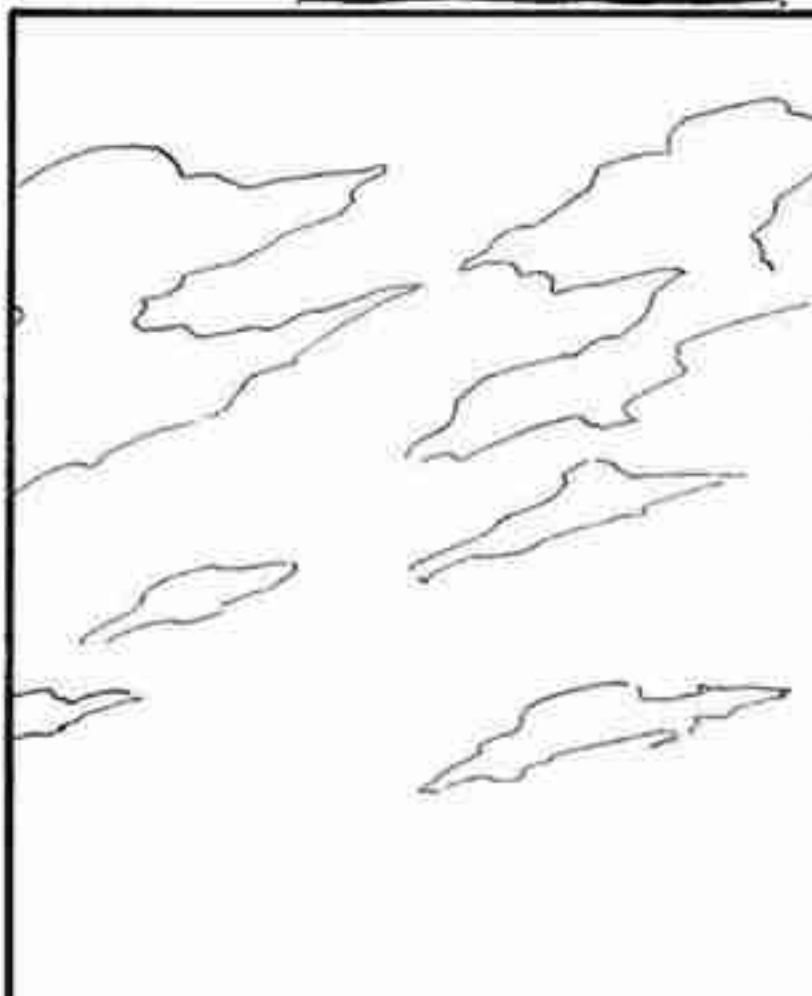
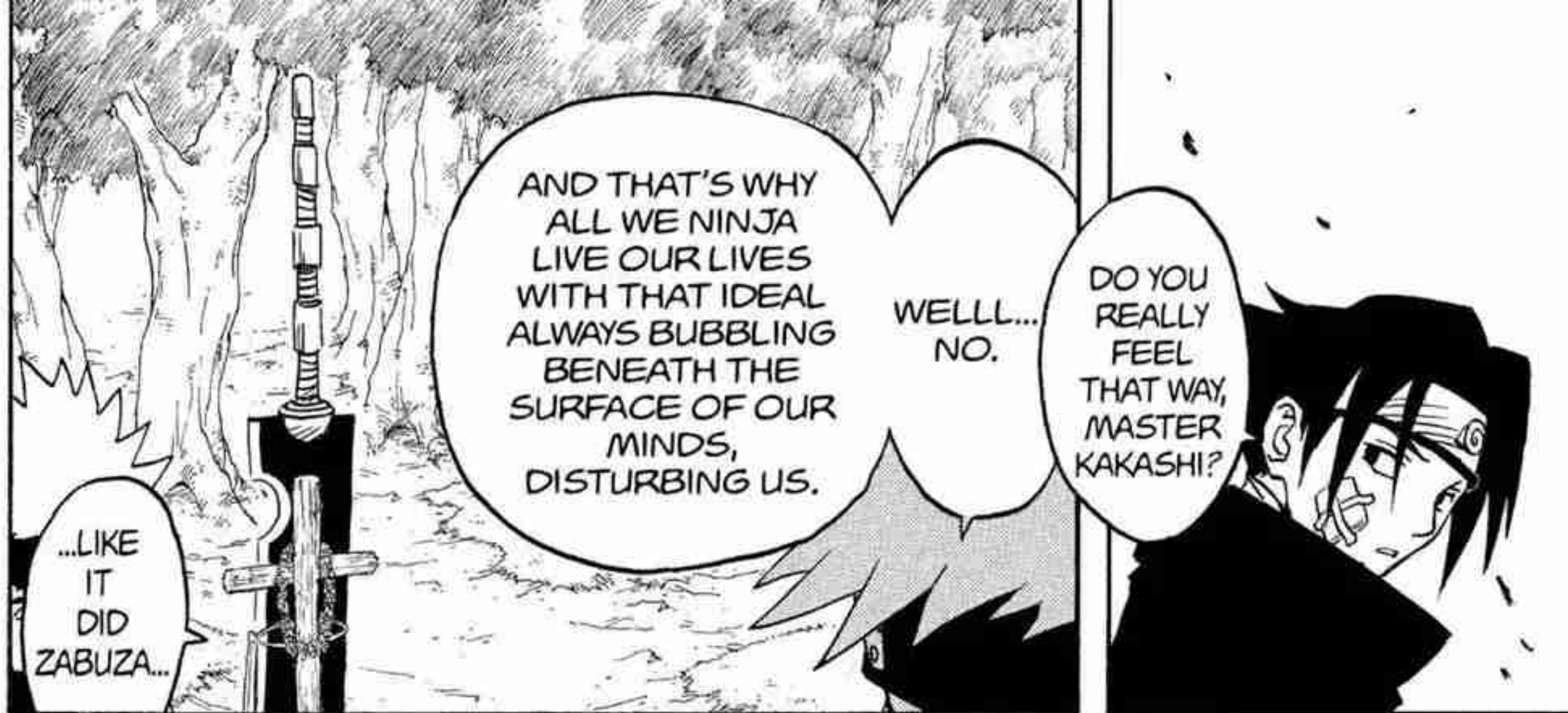


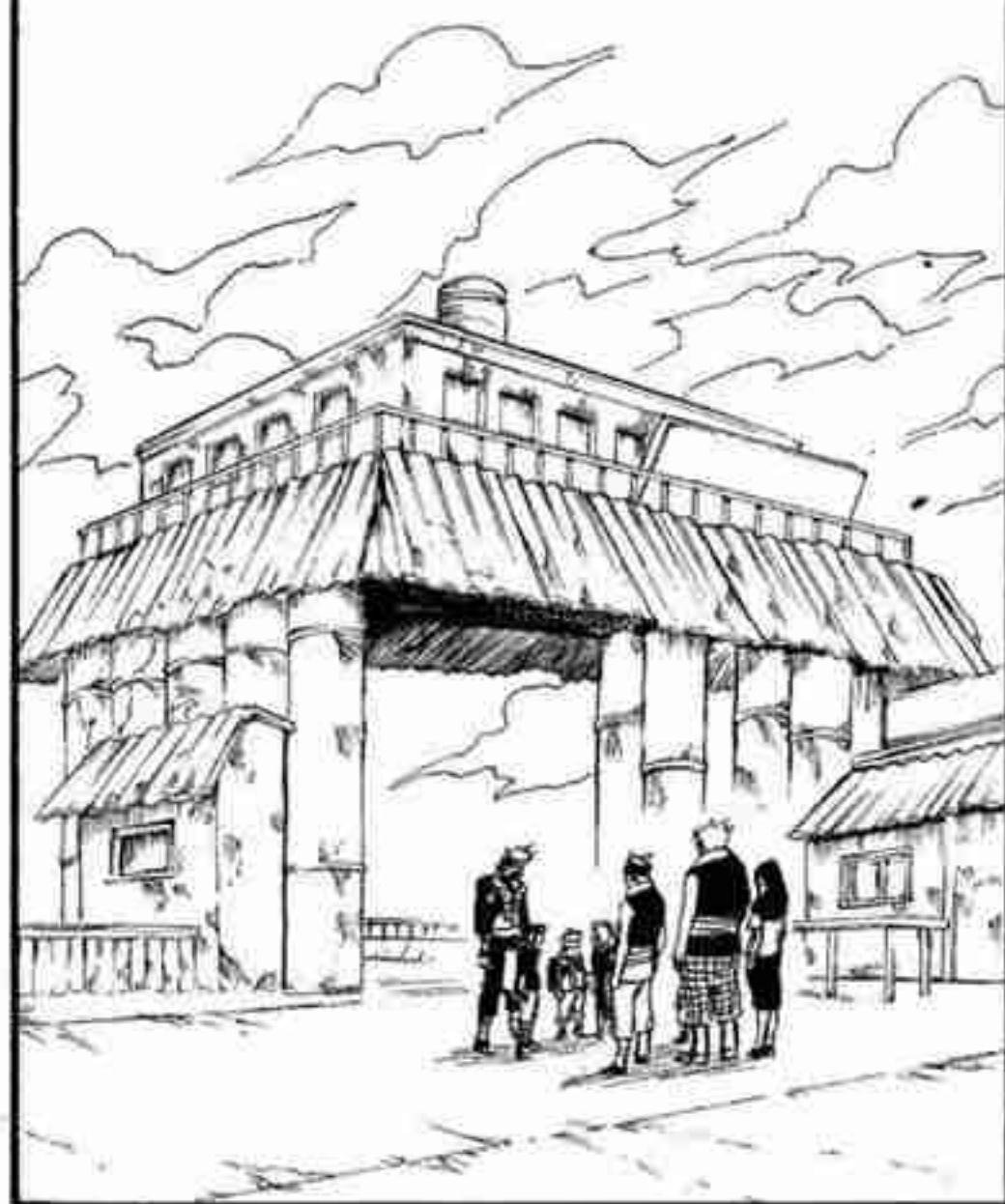














AND
THERE'S
ONLY NAME
THAT WILL
TRULY FIT.

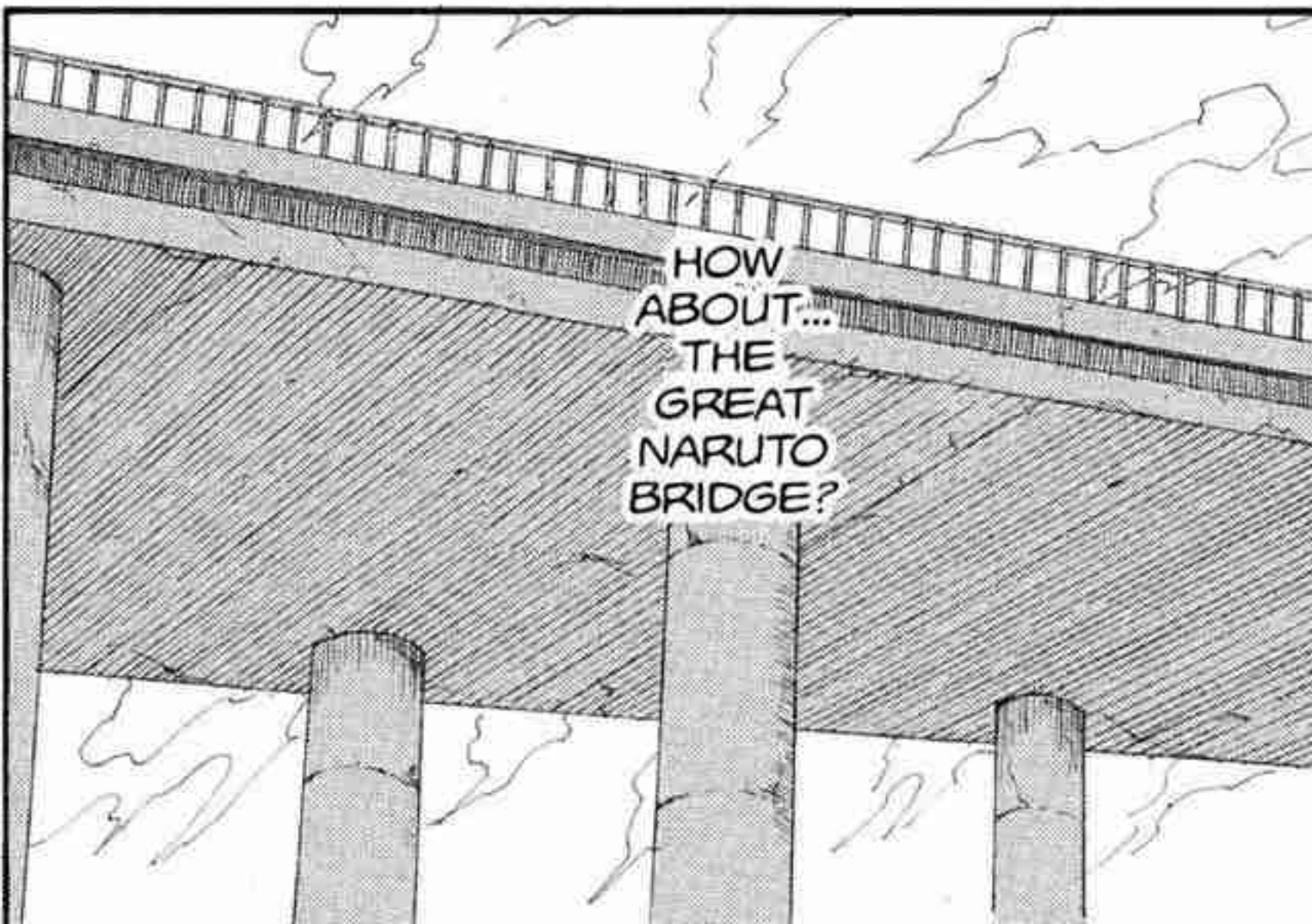
AND SPEAKING
OF BRIDGES,
WE STILL
HAVE TO
OFFICIALLY
DEDICATE
THIS ONE.

WHAT
ARE
GOING
TO CALL
IT?



NARUTO BUILT
THE BRIDGE
THAT
EVENTUALLY
CARRIED US ALL
TO HOPE AND
COURAGE!

THAT BOY
TOUCHED
LITTLE INARI'S
HEART...
AND INARI
TOUCHED THE
HEARTS OF ALL
THE PEOPLE
IN OUR CITY...



HOW
ABOUT...
THE
GREAT
NARUTO
BRIDGE?

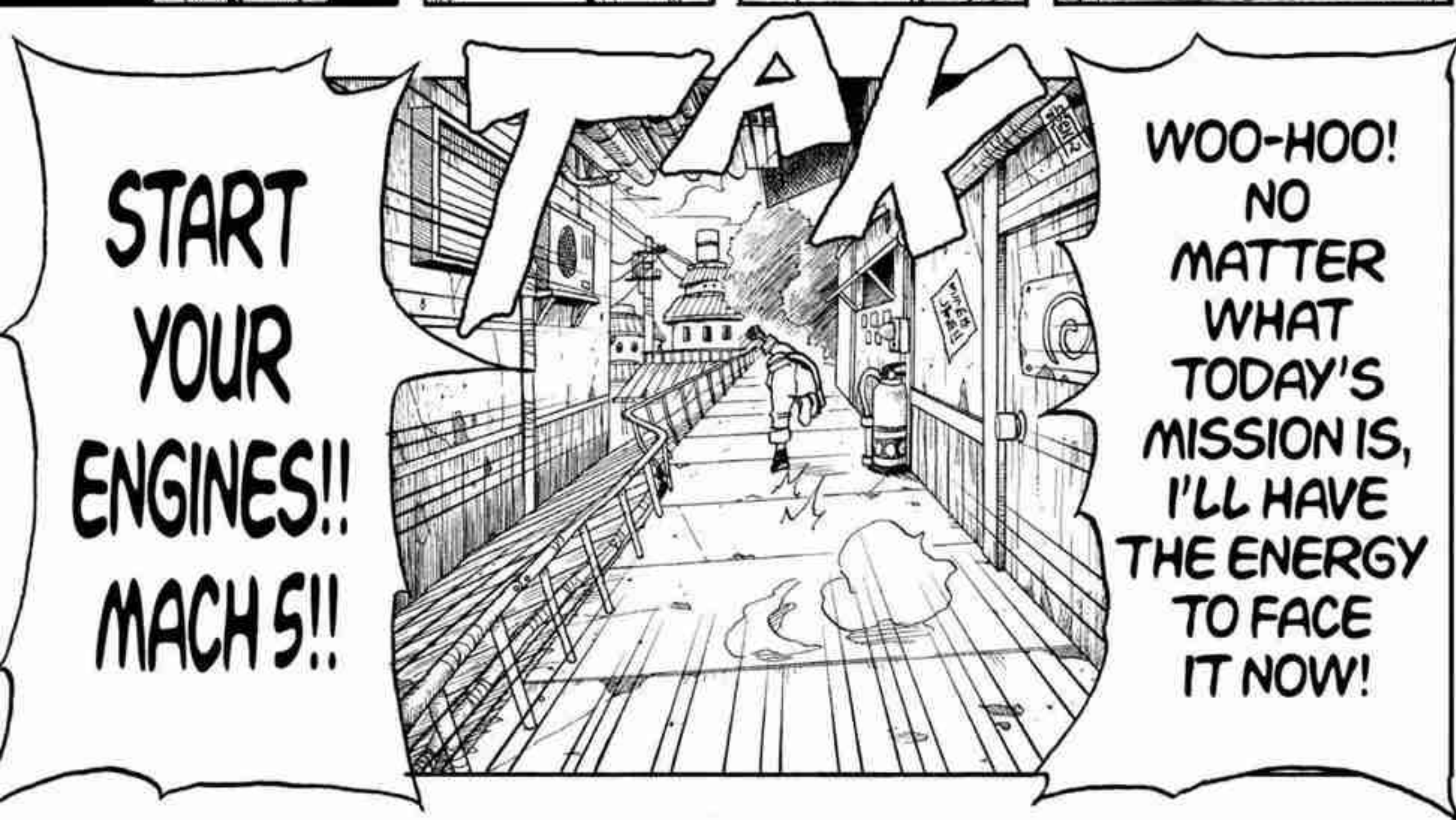


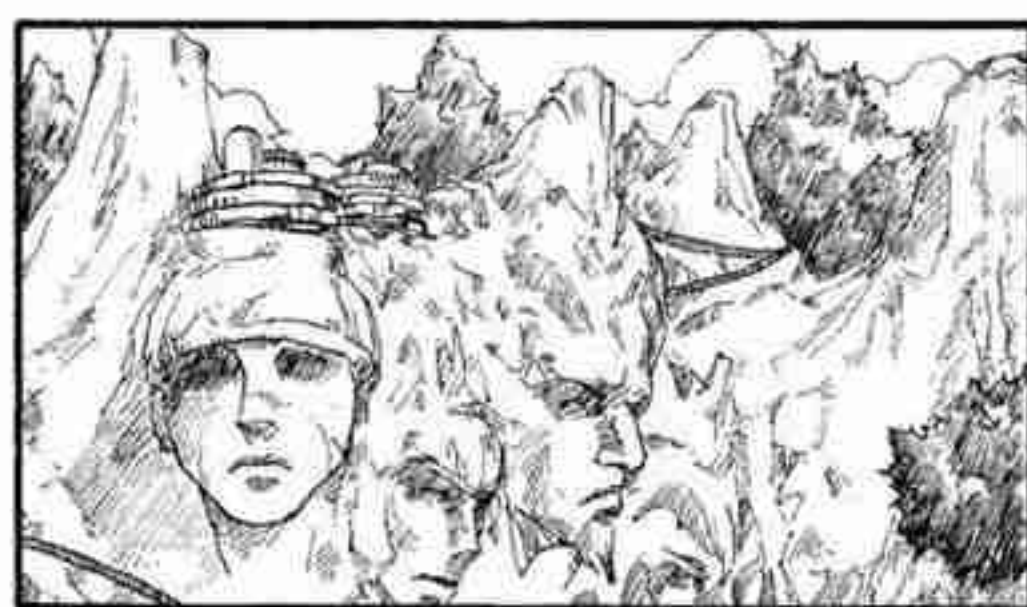
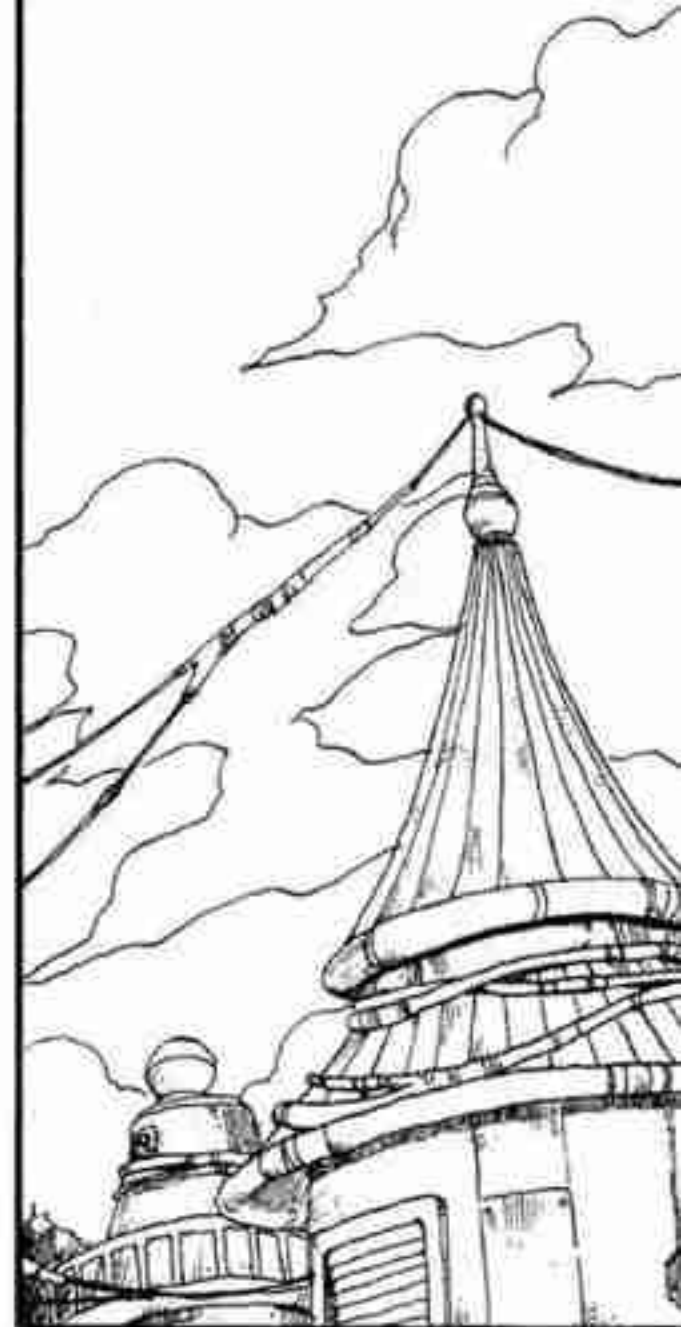




Number 34: Intruders?







**YOUR NOSE
IS GROWING,
MASTER!!!**

YOU ALWAYS LAY IT ON TOO THICK.

GOOD
MORNING,
EVERYONE.

THREE
HOURS
LATER...

I'M
AFRAID
I GOT
LOST
ON THE
WAY HERE...

AS NINJA
DECEPTIONS
GO... THAT
ONE SUCKS!

WE WANT ACTION!
A CHALLENGE!
SOMETHING
WHERE
I COULD USE
MY SKILL -LIKE
THIS... AND THIS...
AND - AND -

OH,
REALLY?

I SEE
WHERE YOU'RE
GOING WITH THIS...

SIZZLE

HEY,
MASTER
KAKASHI!
ANY HOT NEW
MISSIONS FOR
THE 7TH CELL?
WE'VE HAD
NOTHING BUT
GIMMES!
BORRRRING!



SAVING YOU
IS SUCH
A NUISANCE,
SASUKE!

IT'S
OVER,
AS OF
NOW!

THAT'S
WHAT
I'LL TELL
'IM!!



WOULD
YOU
CHILL?!

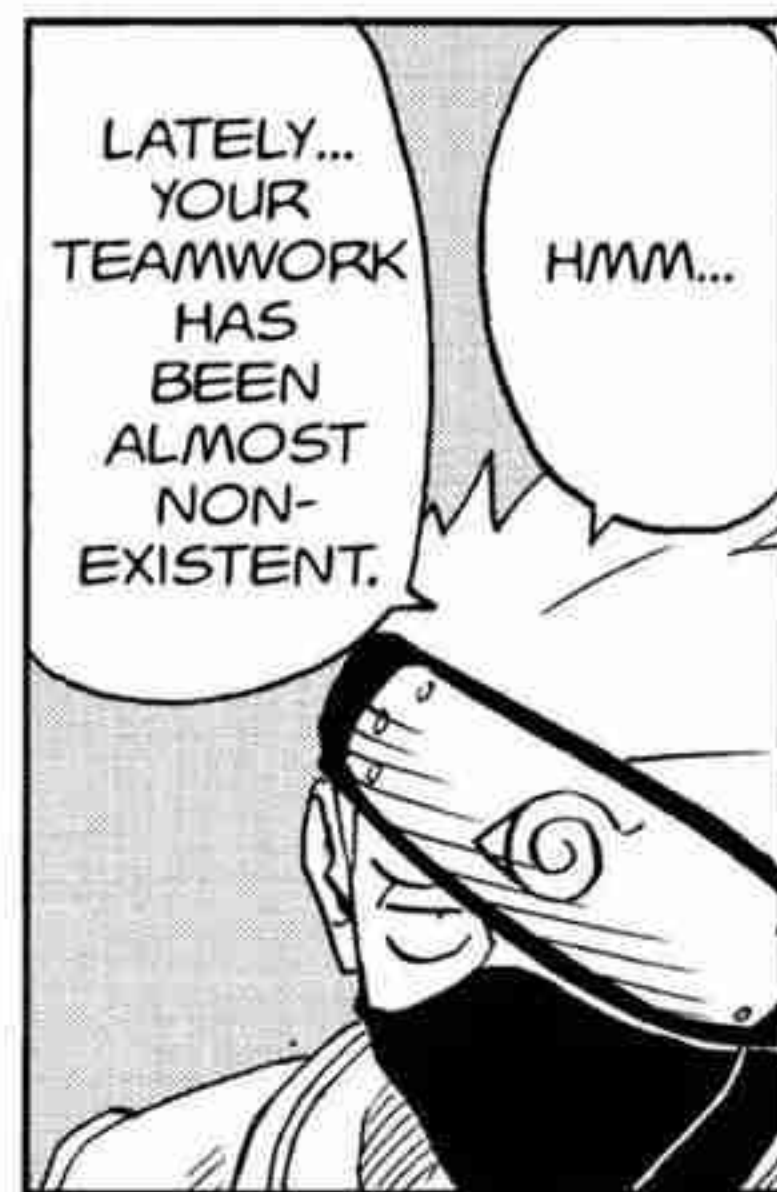
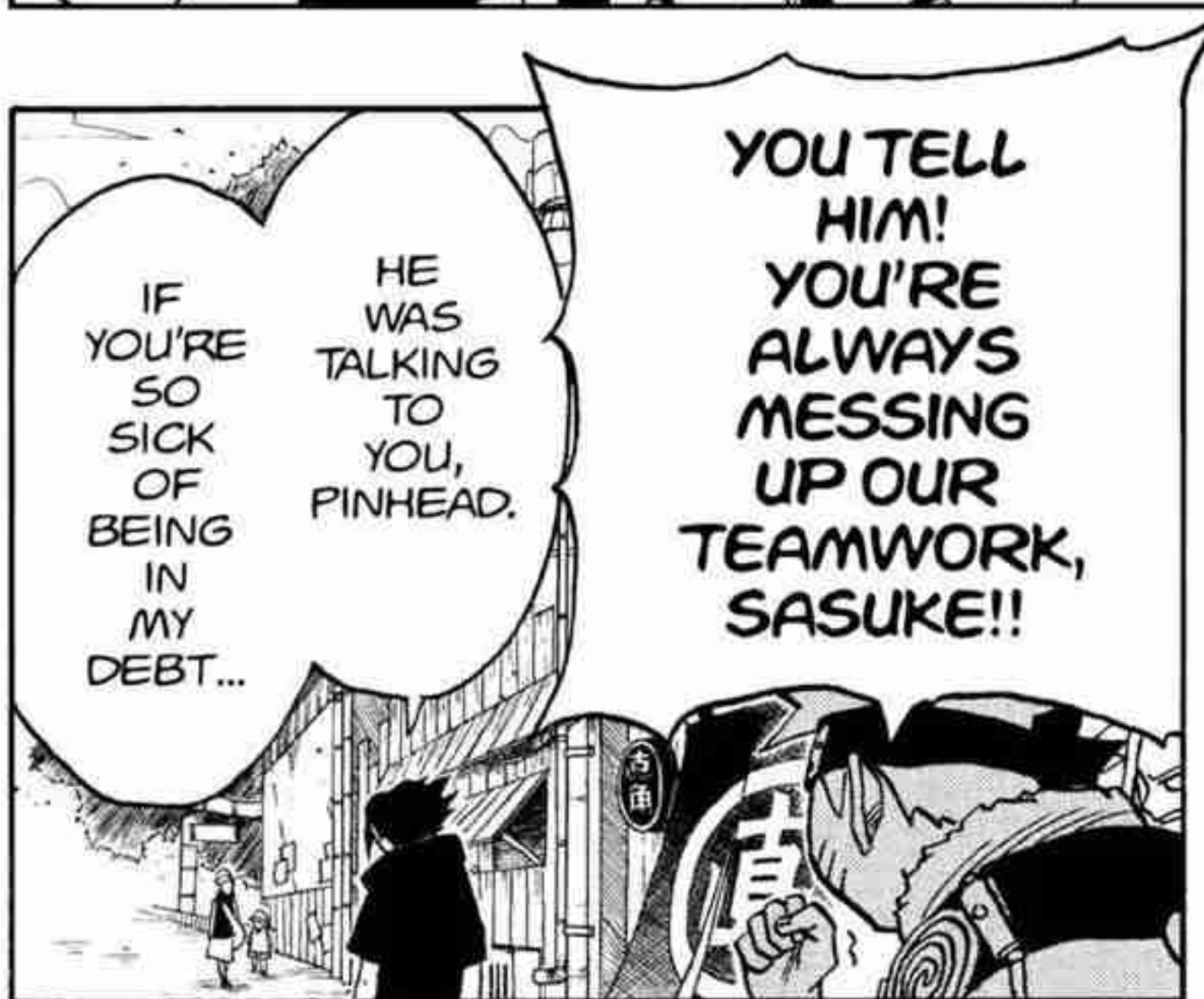
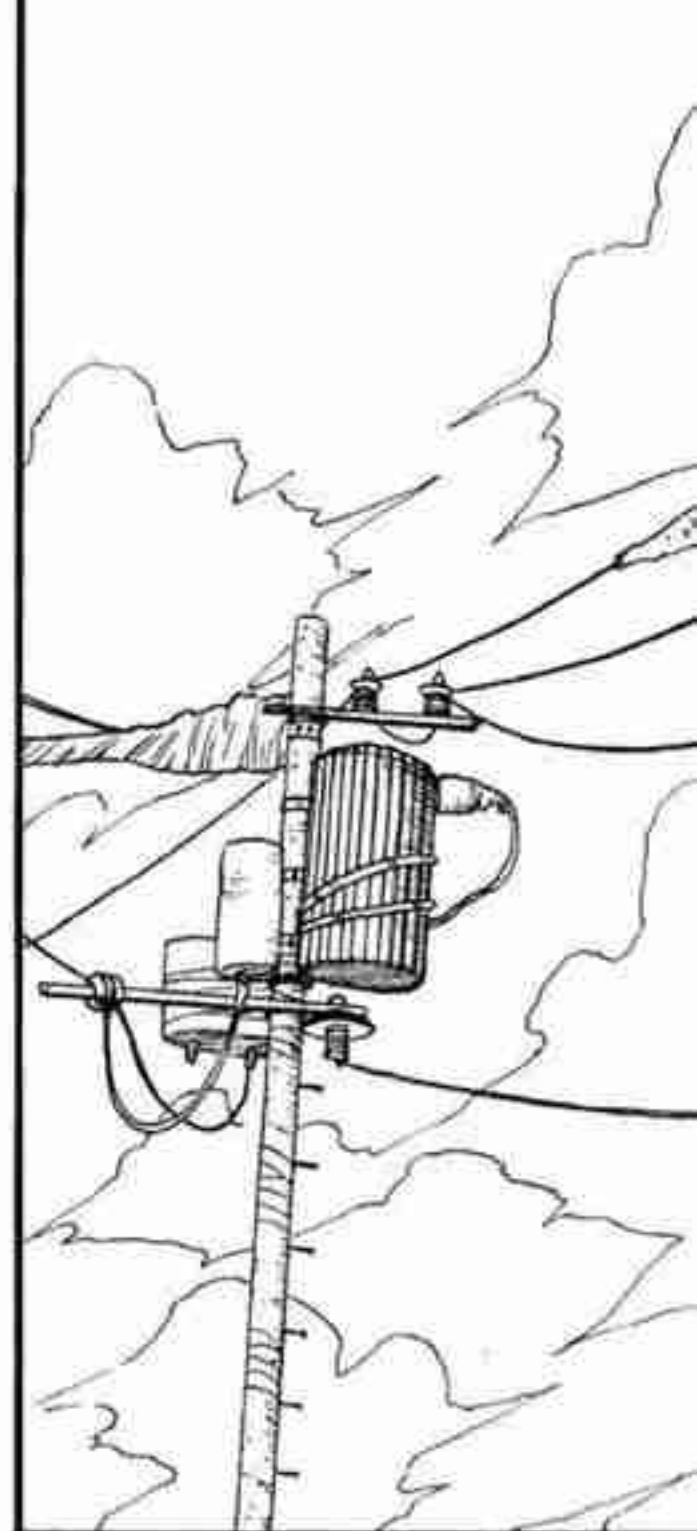
YESSIR!

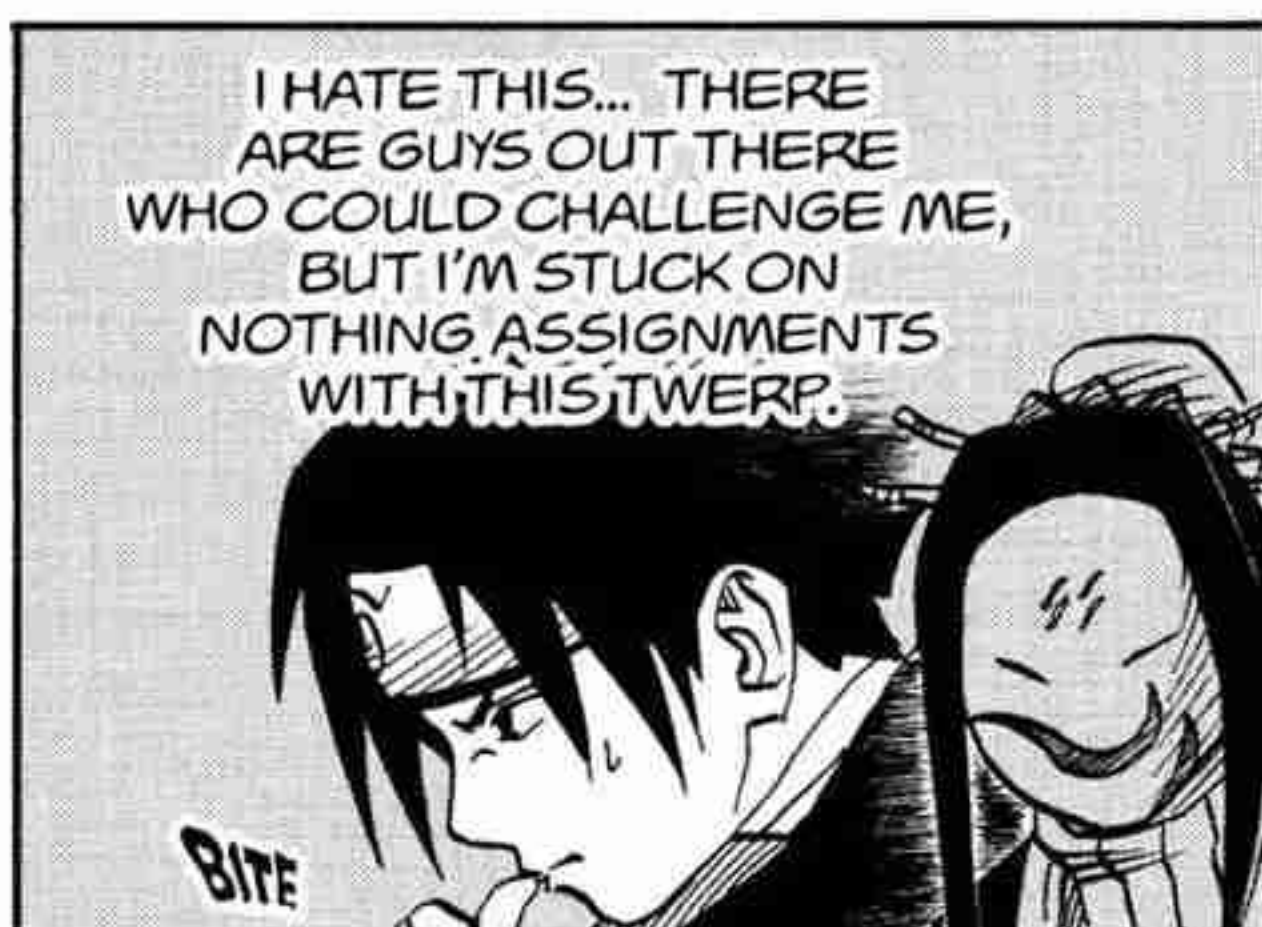
HEY,
NARUTO!
WAKE UP!
WE'RE
HEADING
OUT ON
OUR
MISSION!

EVERY TIME
WE GO ON A
MISSION, THEY END
UP SHOWING ME
UP AND SAVING ME.
BUT NOT
THIS TIME!

GRR...
THOSE
TWO...





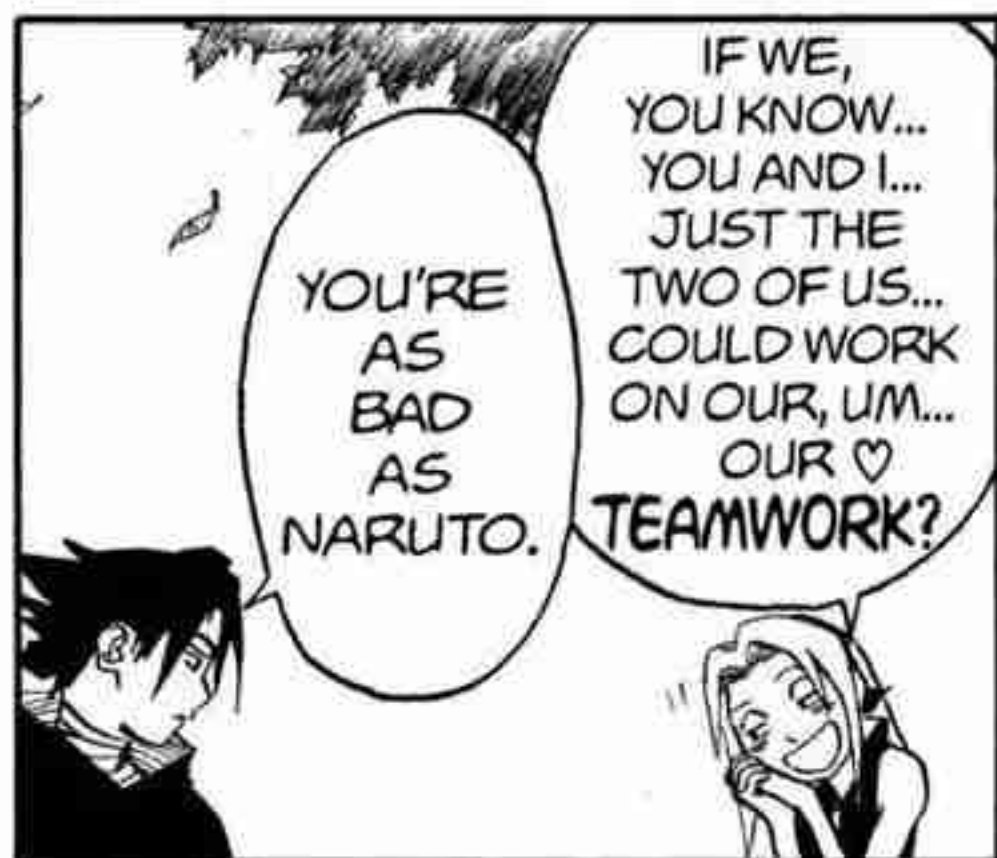




THEN
I'M
GOING
HOME.

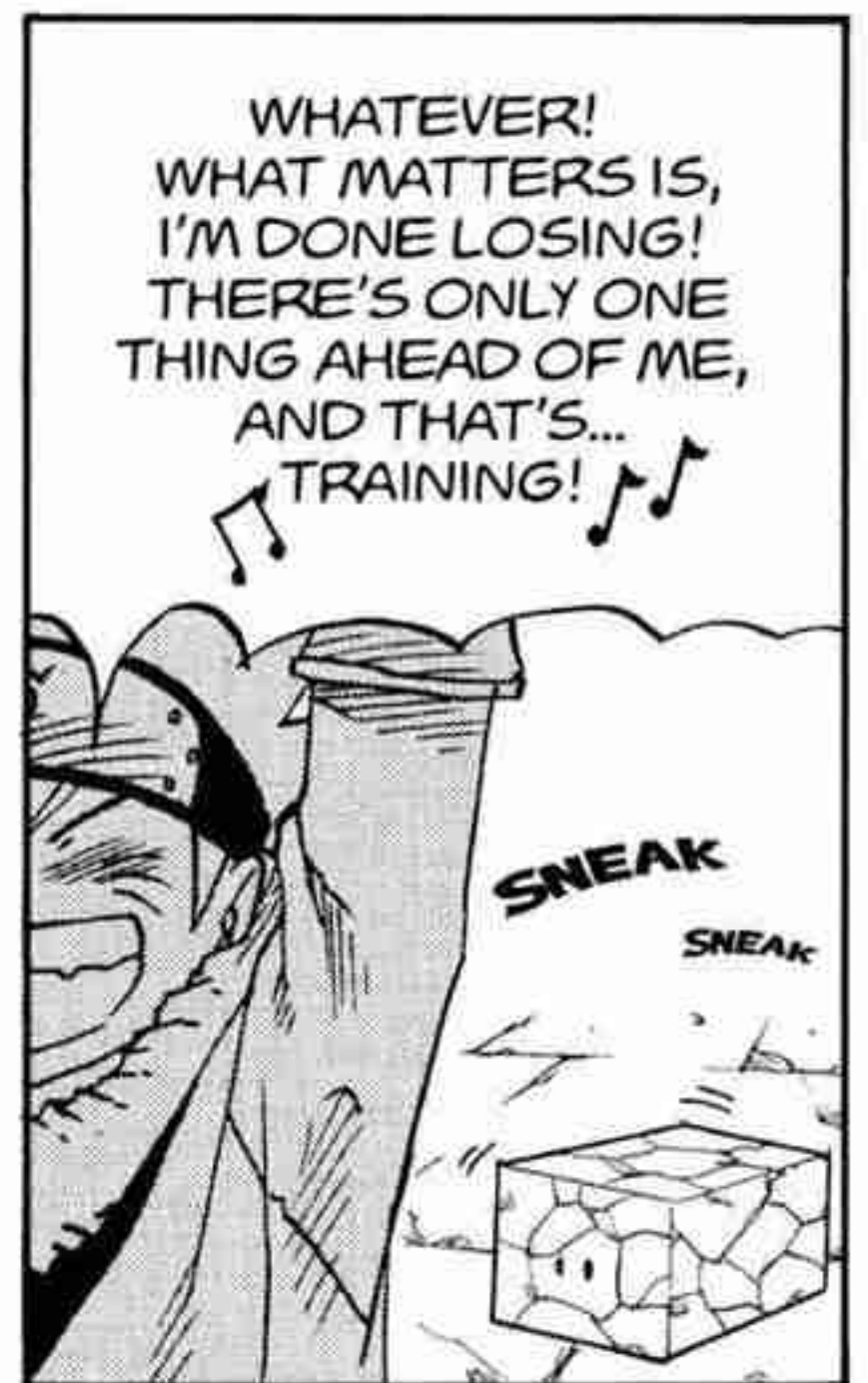
I'VE
GOT TO
GO HAND
IN MY
REPORT ON
TODAY'S
MISSION.

OKAY,
THAT'S IT.
WE'LL CALL
IT A DAY
RIGHT
NOW.



'CAUSE I'M
ALWAYS
THE WEAKEST...
THE ONE WITH
ALMOST NO
SPECIAL
SKILLS!

HE'S RIGHT...
IT DOESN'T
MATTER WHAT
OUR MISSION IS.
THEY'RE ALL
THE SAME
TO ME...



LITTLE HINT...
NO ROCK HAS
PERFECT ANGLES,
PERFECT CORNERS...
AND EYE HOLES.
KIND OF A BIG CLUE.



PSYCH!!
FAKED
YOU
OUT,
ROCK!!!



TA-DAAAAA

LEAVE IT
TO THE
MAN
I HAVE
ACKNOWLEDGED
AS BEING
ALMOST
MY EQUAL!
YOUR
SKILLS
RIVAL
MY OWN!!



HEH HEH
HEH
YOU'RE
OUR
IDOL,
RIGHT?
WE'RE
COPYING
THE
STYLE YOU
USED
TO WEAR.

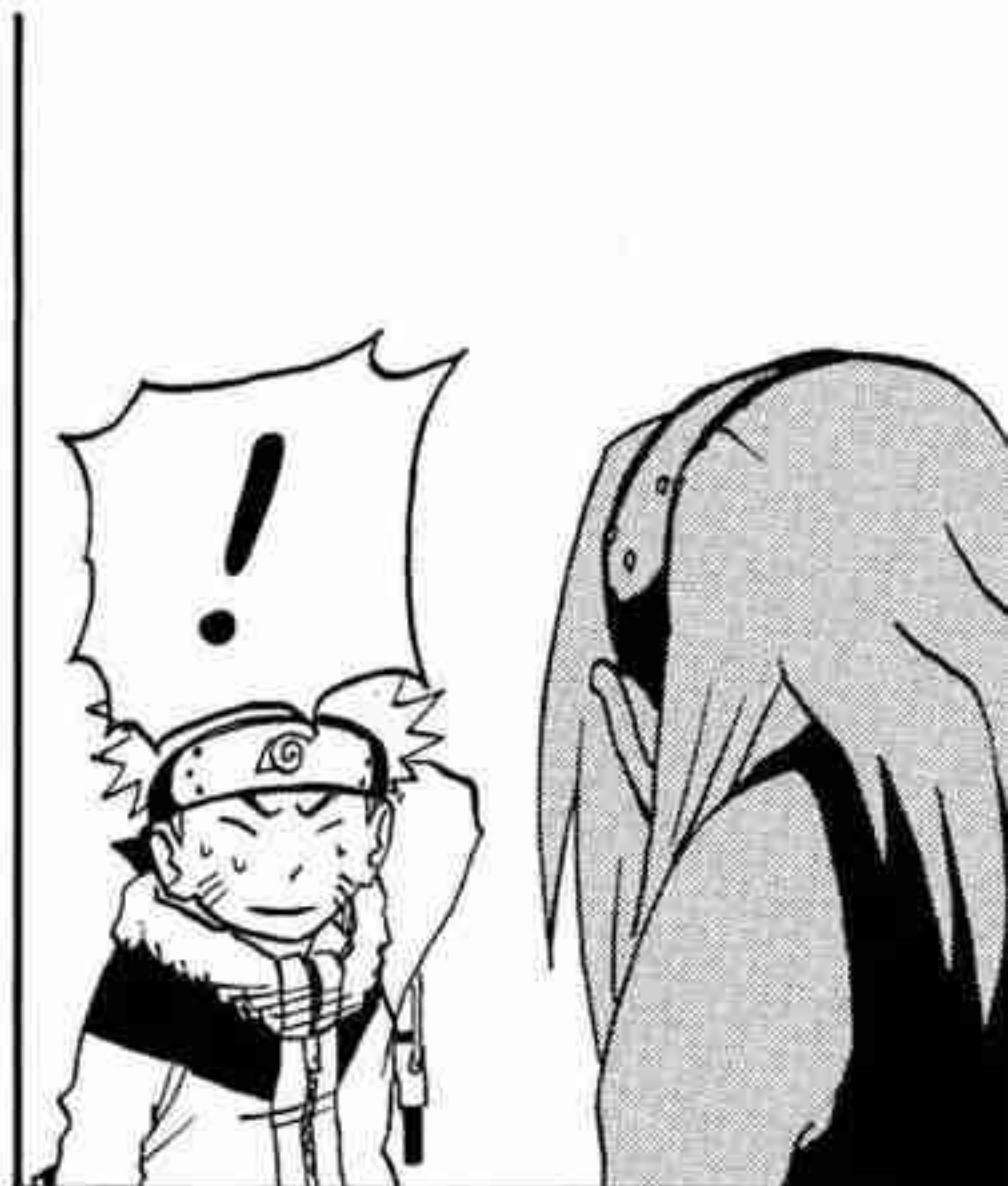


UHHH...

WHAT'S
UP
WITH
THE
GOGGLES?

OH,
IT'S
YOU
GUYS.

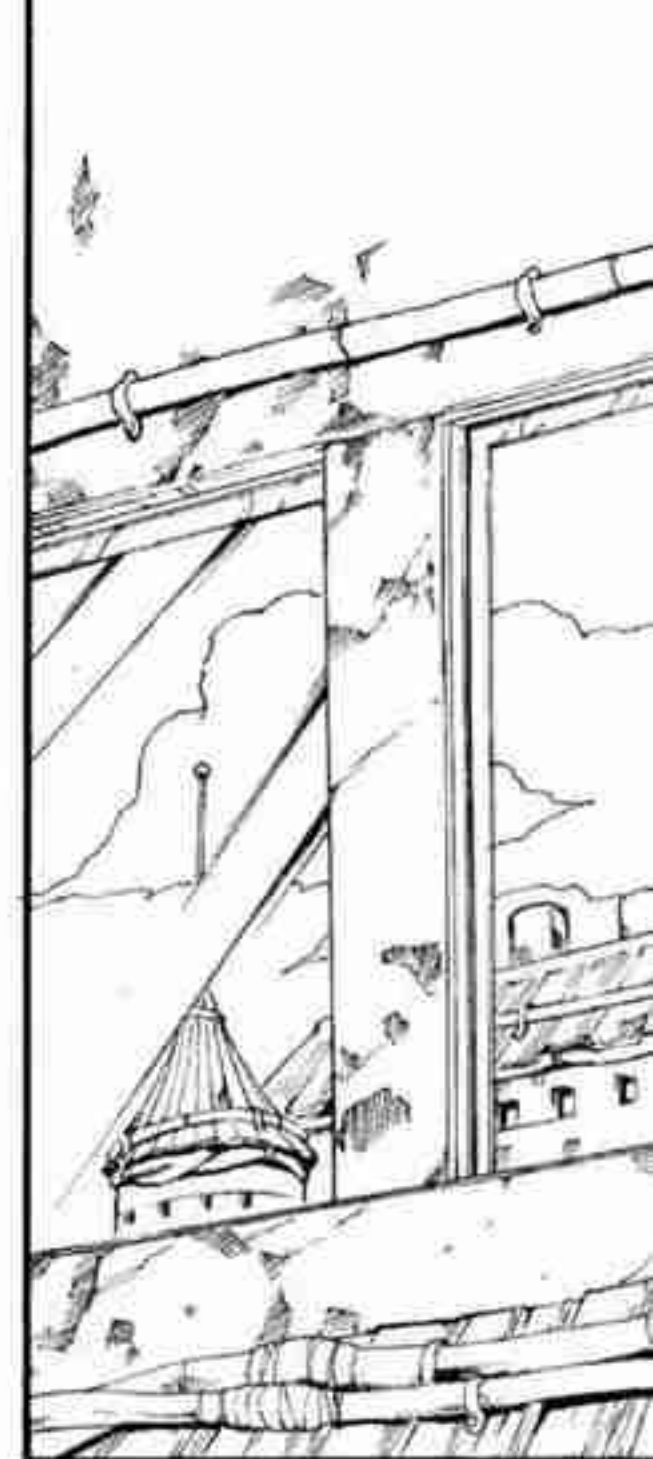








THANKS
FOR YOUR
LATEST
REPORT,
MASTER
KAKASHI.

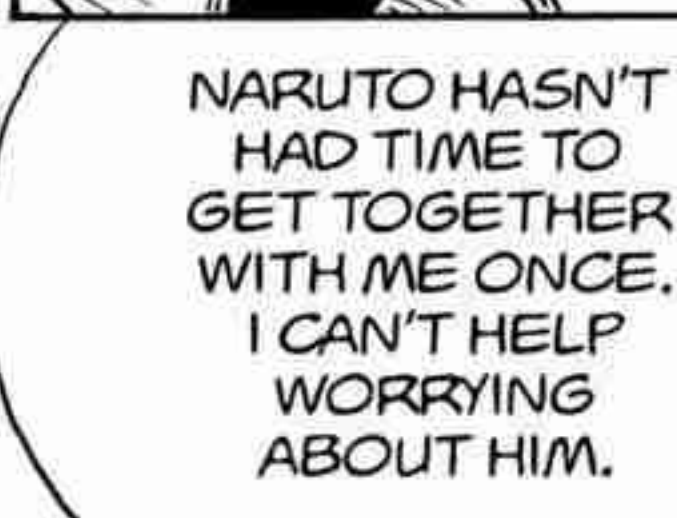


HE'S...
GETTING
THERE.

DOES
HE GET
ALONG
WELL WITH
THE OTHER
MEMBERS
OF HIS
CELL?



HOW'S
OUR
LITTLE
HELLION?



NARUTO HASN'T
HAD TIME TO
GET TOGETHER
WITH ME ONCE.
I CAN'T HELP
WORRYING
ABOUT HIM.



YOUR
TEAM'S
SEEN A LOT
OF ACTION
LATELY.

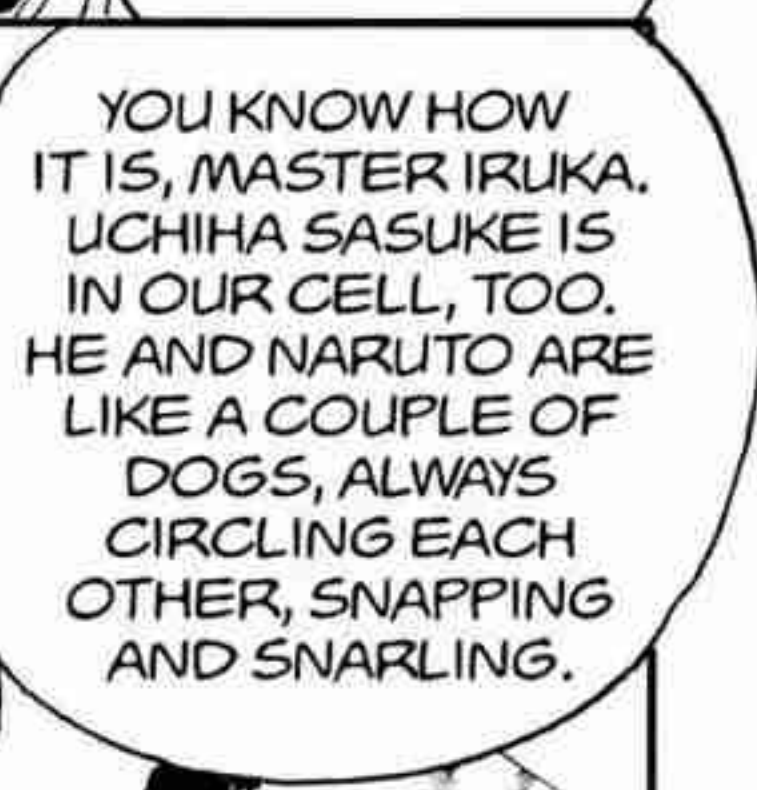


REALLY?

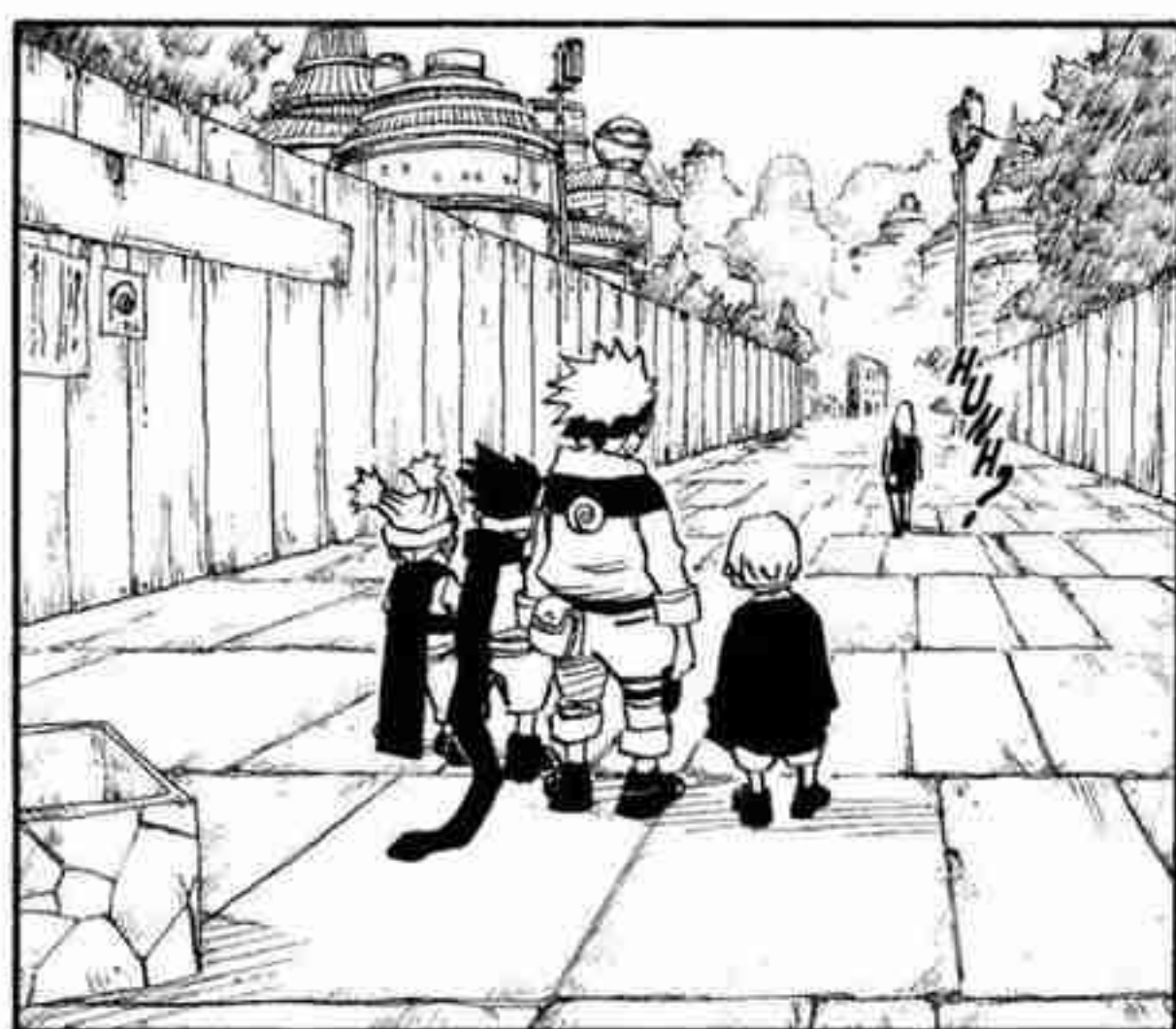
....!



BUT IT KEEPS
NARUTO ON
HIS TOES. HE'S
DEVELOPING
FAST.
HE'S ALWAYS
HOPING
TO CATCH UP
TO HIS HERO...
YOU.

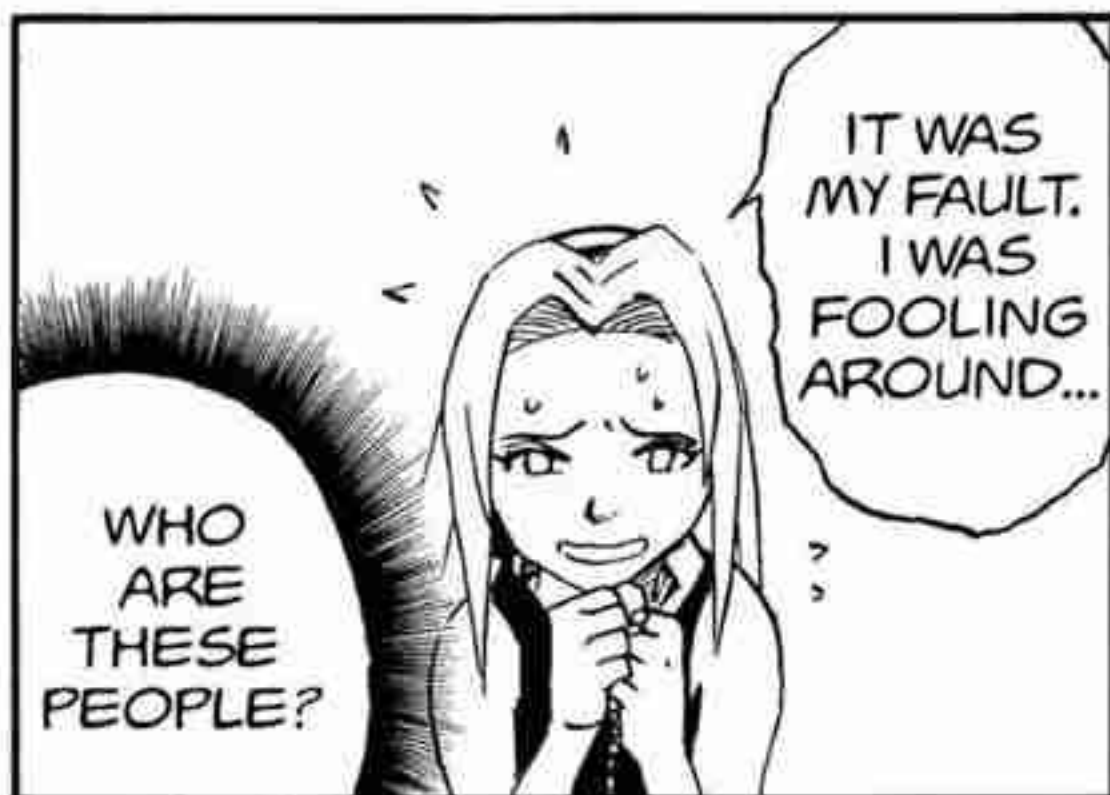


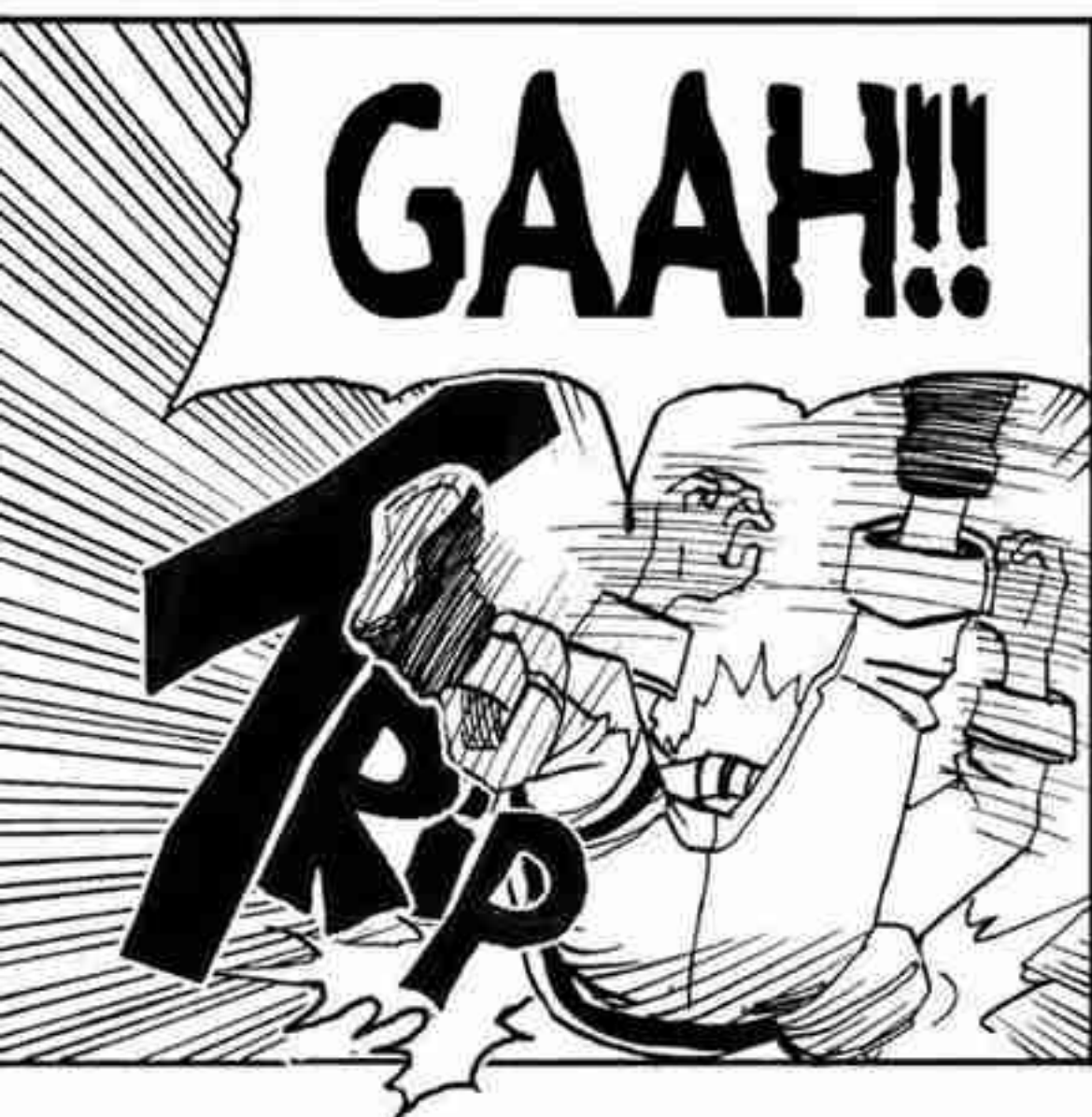
YOU KNOW HOW
IT IS, MASTER IRIKA.
UCHIHA SASUKE IS
IN OUR CELL, TOO.
HE AND NARUTO ARE
LIKE A COUPLE OF
DOGS, ALWAYS
CIRCLING EACH
OTHER, SNAPPING
AND SNARLING.















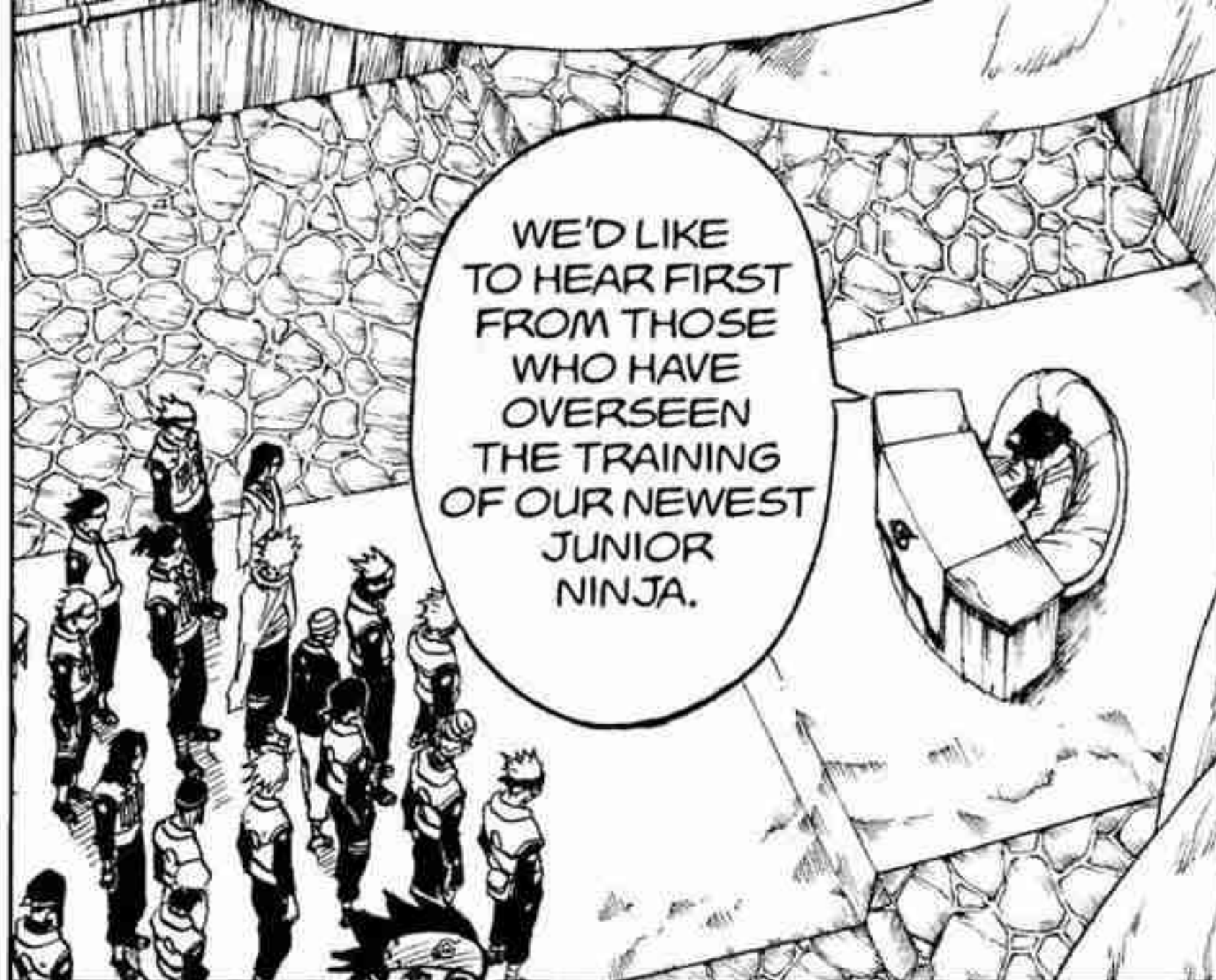
Number 35:

Iruka vs. Kakashi





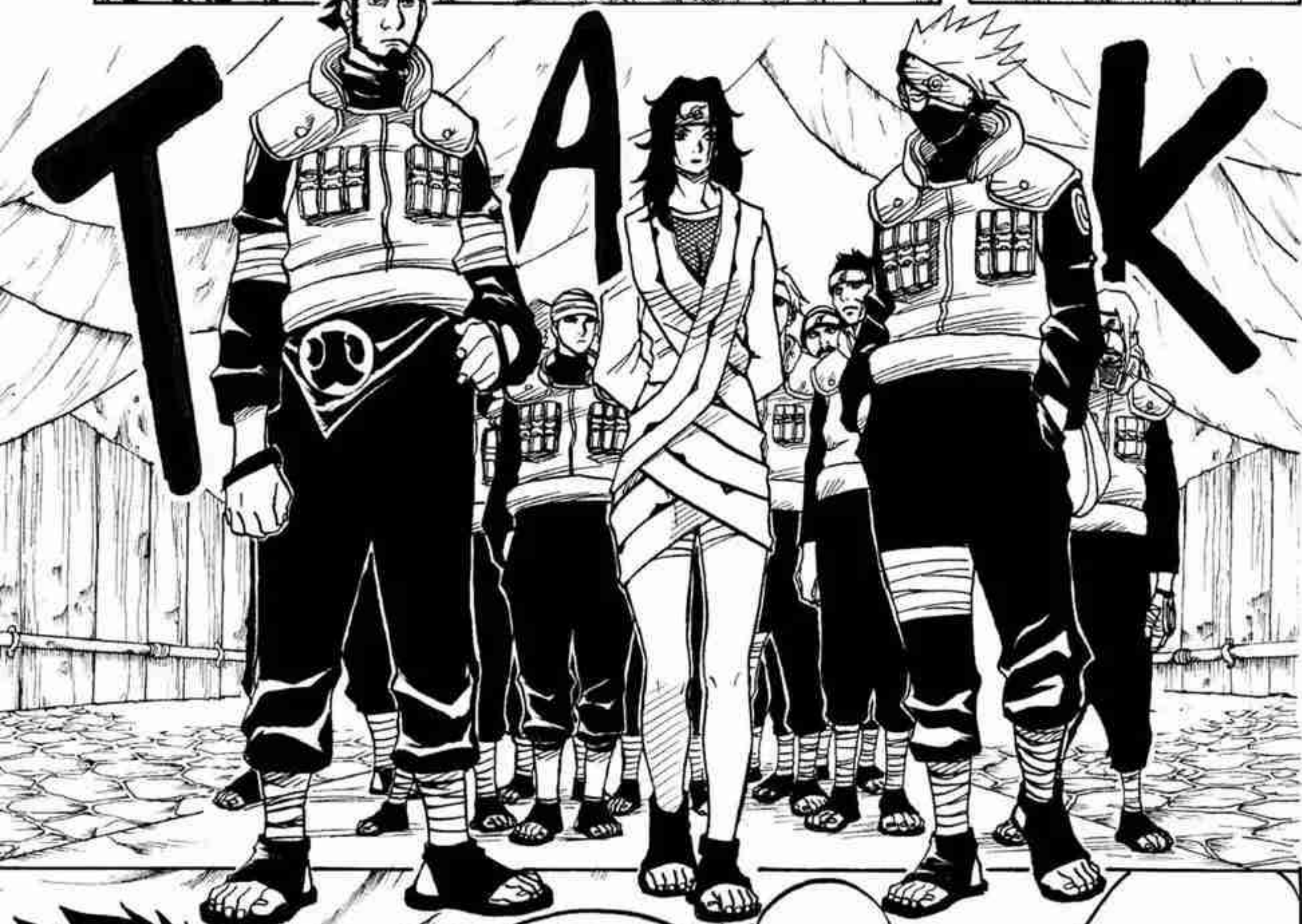




WE'D LIKE
TO HEAR FIRST
FROM THOSE
WHO HAVE
OVERSEEN
THE TRAINING
OF OUR NEWEST
JUNIOR
NINJA.



NOW,
THEN...



...DO ANY
OF YOU
HAVE, AMONG
YOUR CHARGES,
ANY GENIN
YOU'D
RECOMMEND
FOR THIS
YEAR'S
JOURNEYMEN
EXAMS?

TELL
US...

MASTERS
KAKASHI,
KURENAI,
AND
ASUMA.





BEYOND THAT, EMPLOY YOUR OWN JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER THEY ARE READY TO ASPIRE TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

THEY MUST HAVE COMPLETED A MINIMUM OF EIGHT MISSIONS.

...THAT BEFORE WE CAN EVEN CONSIDER THEM,



YOU MAY BEGIN, KAKASHI.



HE SHOULDN'T BE ASKING THIS YET... IT'S TOO SOON FOR ANY OF THEM.

TO BE TRULY COMPETITIVE, CANDIDATES SHOULD PROBABLY HAVE COMPLETED AT LEAST DOUBLE THE RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF MISSIONS...



- THAT ALL THREE OF THEM ARE READY FOR THE CHŪNIN SELECTION EXAM.

CELL NUMBER 7, LED BY KAKASHI, CONSISTS OF UCHIHA SASUKE, UZUMAKI NARUTO, AND HARUNO SAKURA. I VOW UPON THE HONOR OF MY CLAN, THE HATAKE -



CELL NUMBER 8, LED BY KURENAI, CONSISTS OF HYUGA HINATA, INUZUKA KIBA, AND ABURAME SHINO. I VOW UPON MY OWN CLAN, THE YUHI, THAT I AM AS CERTAIN AS IS MY ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE -





CERTAINLY, THEY ARE ALL GIFTED AND SHOW BOTH COMMITMENT AND TALENT... BUT IT'S TOO SOON FOR KIDS THAT YOUNG TO BE STEPPING UP TO THE JOURNEYMAN LEVEL.

FORGIVE ME IF I OVERSTEP, BUT MOST OF THE NINE STUDENTS JUST NAMED...

... WERE MY STUDENTS WHILE THEY WERE AT THE ACADEMY.



NARUTO'S NOT LIKE YOU!



I WAS SIX YEARS YOUNGER THAN NARUTO WHEN I ATTAINED THE RANK OF CHŪNIN, IRUKA.



ONLY WITH TIME WILL THEY HAVE THE KIND OF EXPERIENCE AND MATURITY THOSE EXAMS REQUIRE.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEIR SUPERVISORS CAN'T SEE THAT.



LET'S ADMIT IT. BREAKING THEM WOULD BE FUN.

THEY GRIPE ABOUT EVERY DETAIL OF EVERY MISSION. JUST FOR ONCE, I THINK IT WOULD DO THEM GOOD TO FIND OUT WHAT REAL PAIN IS...

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?



YOU ALL KNOW WHAT THEY CALL THE CHŪNIN SELECTION EXAMS, DON'T YOU?

DO YOU WANT TO DESTROY THOSE CHILDREN?!



BUT...



I UNDERSTAND YOU...
AND I'M SORRY IF MY RECOMMENDATION UPSETS YOU. BUT I STAND BY IT.

...IT WAS A JOKE, MASTER IRUKA.



KAKASHI...
CAN WE FINISH WITH THIS?



THEY ARE SOLDIERS UNDER MY COMMAND.

IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, ANYWAY...

...THEY'RE NOT YOUR STUDENTS ANYMORE.



...



WHAT A PEST.



...





HE DID IT
AGAIN -
STICKING
HIS NOSE
IN AND
MAKING
ME LOOK
BAD!!



RIIIGHT,

DON'T BE
STUPID.
I COULD HAVE
HANDLED
THAT LOSER
IF SASUKE
HADN'T
BUTTED IN!



GHR

THINK
YOU'RE
PRETTY
SMART,
DON'T
YOU?



COME
DOWN,
LITTLE
SQUIRREL!



KANKURO!
DON'T!

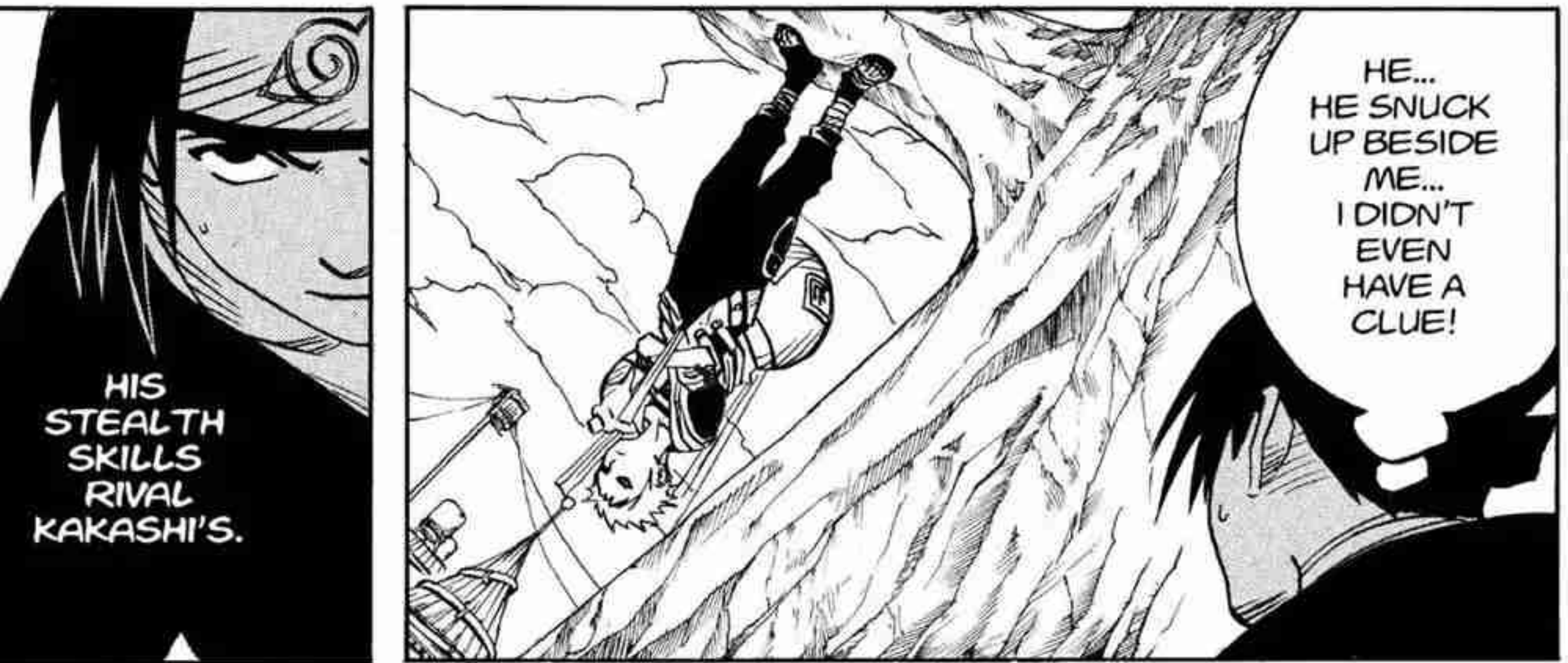


TOK

TELL
ME YOU'RE
NOT
PLANNING
TO USE
THE
'CROW!

: GAARA'S TATTOO SAYS "LOVE."









I
SWEAR
IT WON'T
HAPPEN
AGAIN.

... BUT
WE
DIDN'T
COME
HERE TO
PLAY
AROUND.

SHHM

I KNOW
WE'RE
A LITTLE
EARLY...

!



...COME
FROM
THE
VILLAGE
HIDDEN
IN
THE
SAND.

YES?

ACCORDING
TO
YOUR
HEADBANDS,
YOU
THREE...



WAIT!

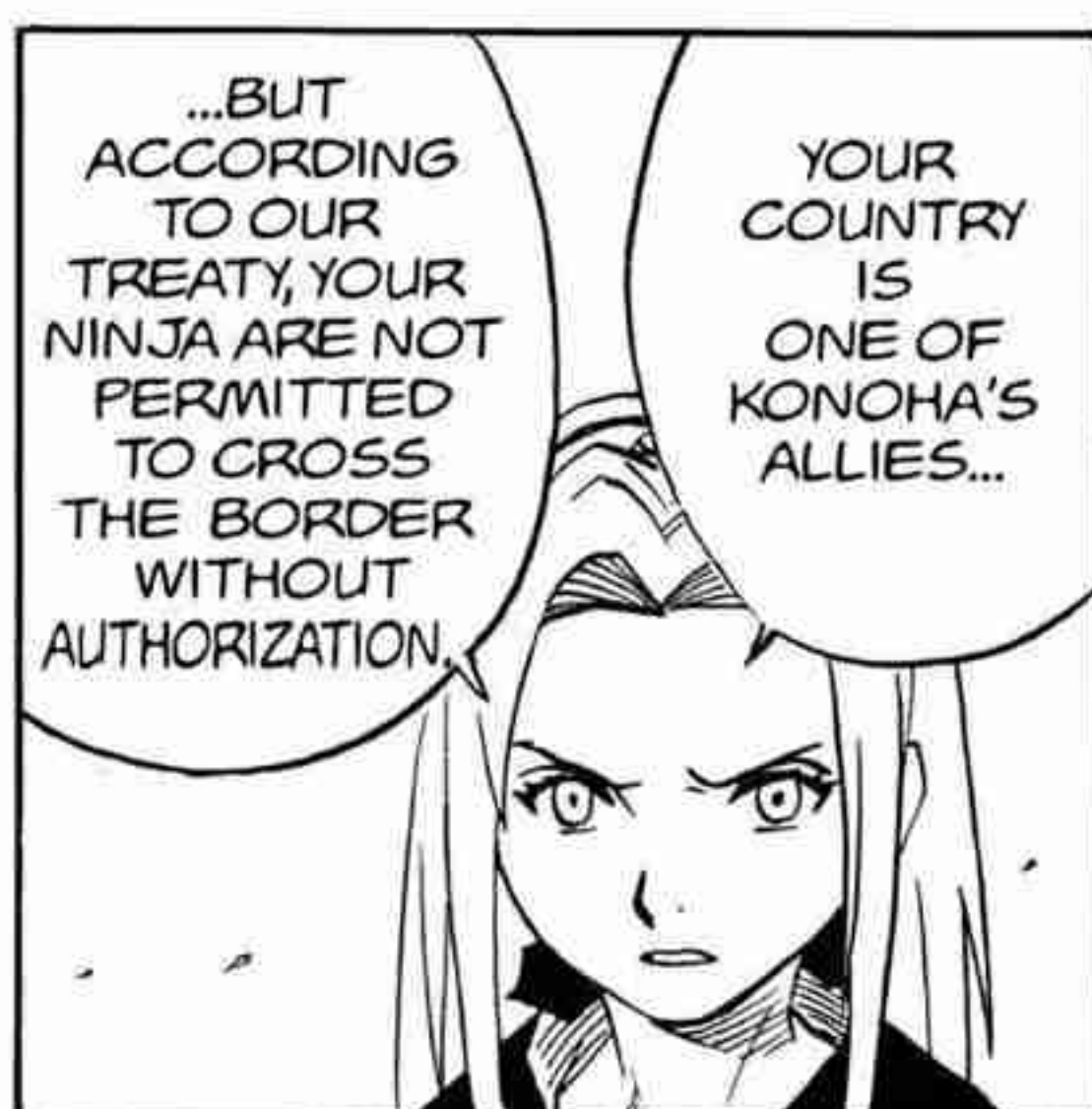
LET'S
GO.

!



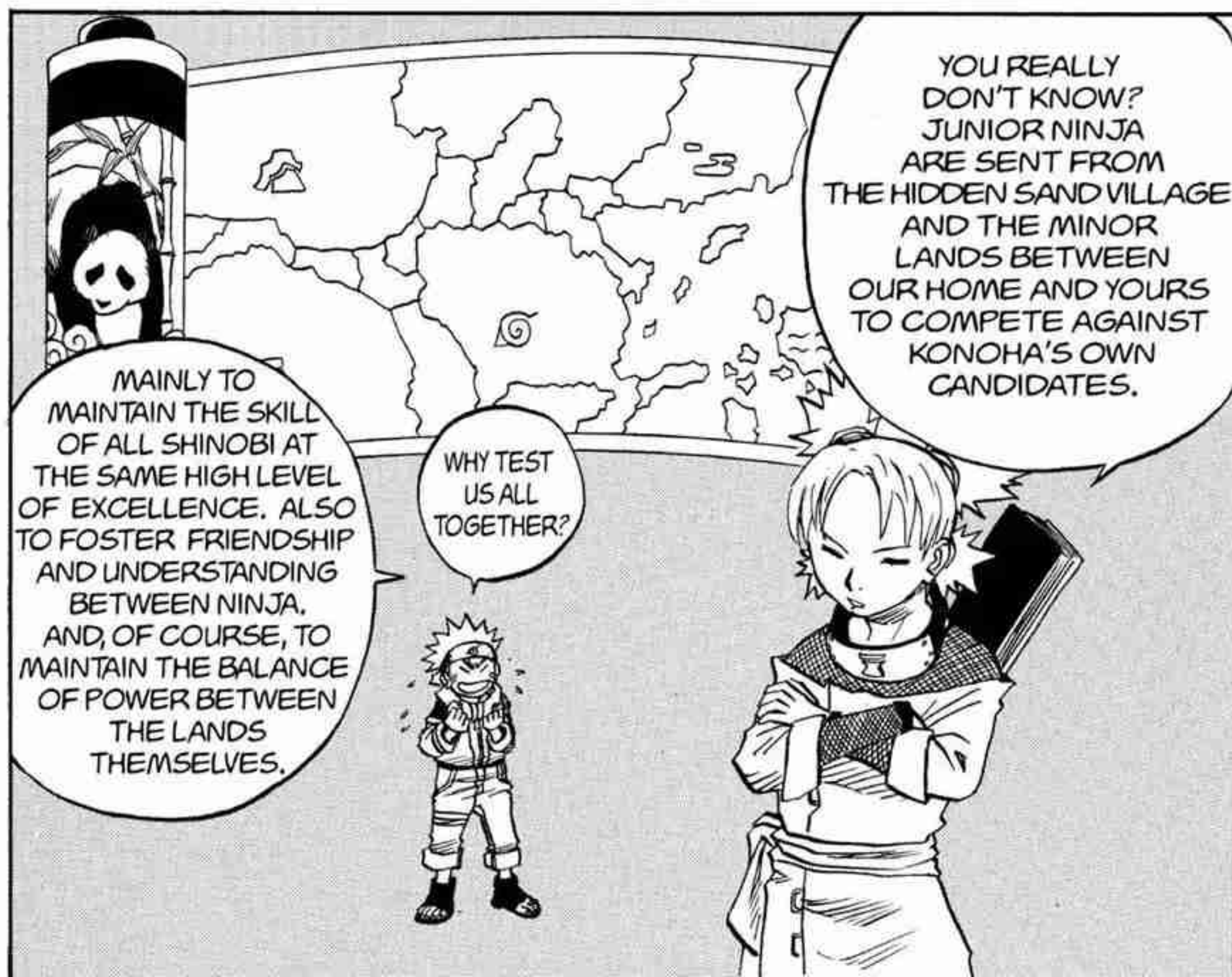
WE
CAN'T
JUST LET
YOU GO
YOUR
MERRY
WAY.

STATE
YOUR
BUSINESS!



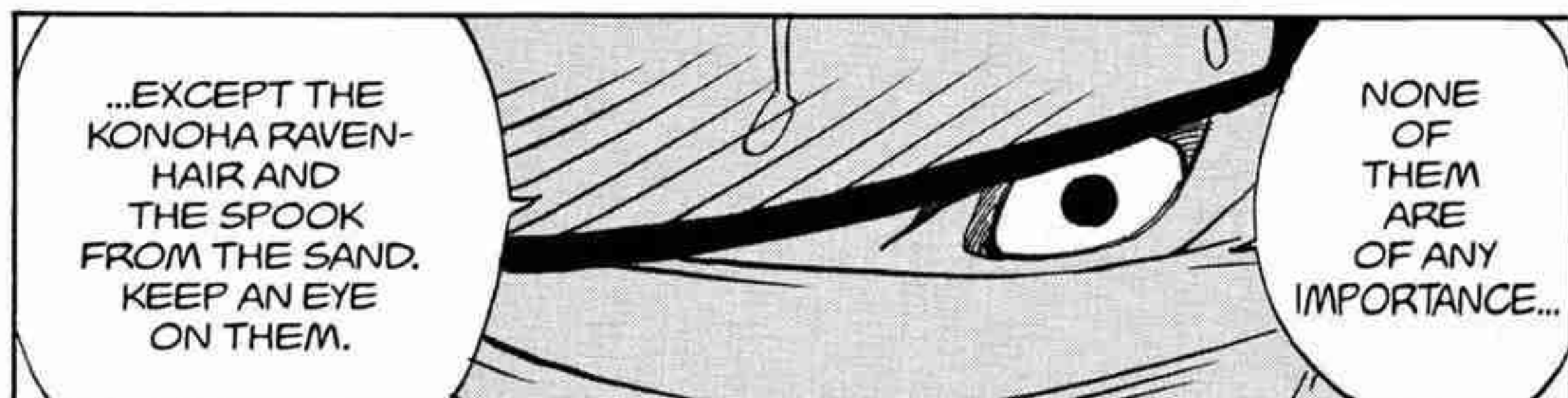
...BUT
ACCORDING
TO OUR
TREATY, YOUR
NINJA ARE NOT
PERMITTED
TO CROSS
THE BORDER
WITHOUT
AUTHORIZATION.

YOUR
COUNTRY
IS
ONE OF
KONOHA'S
ALLIES...



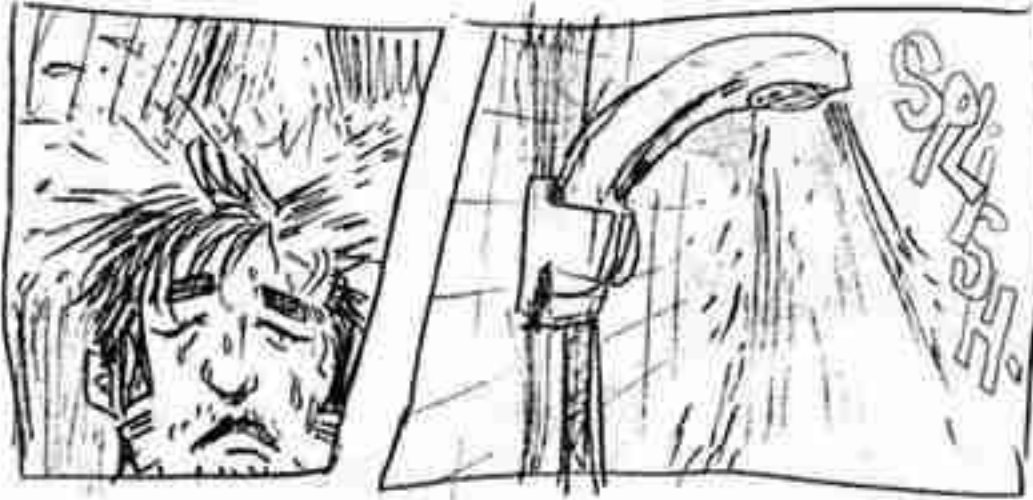
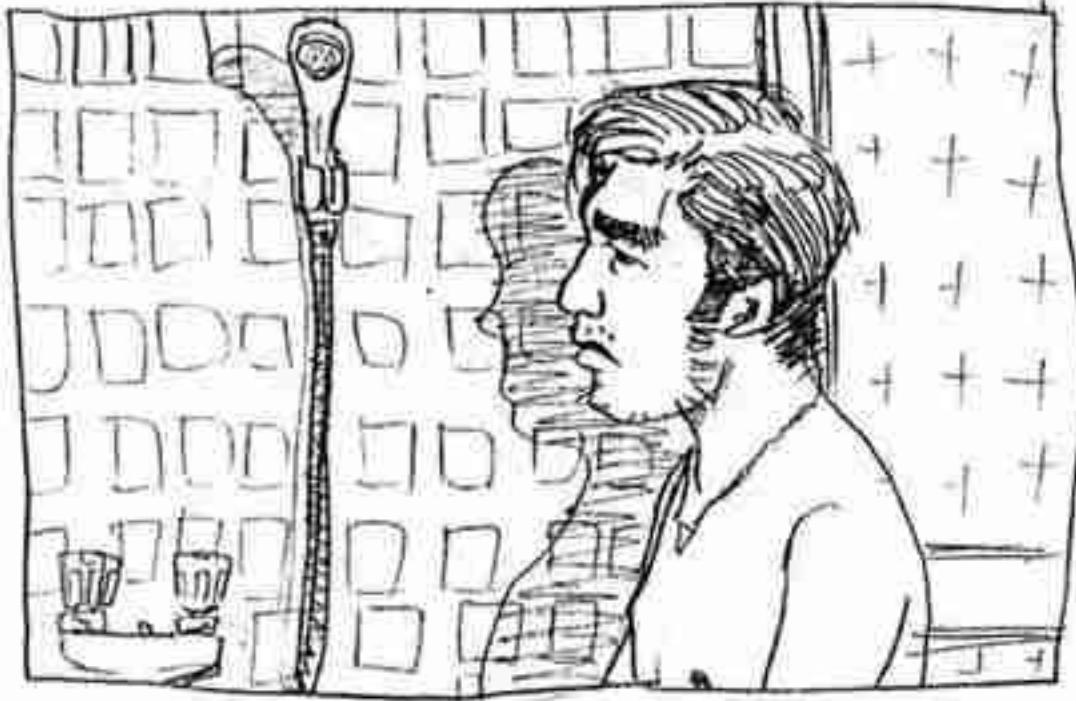






KISHIMOTO MASASHI'S

POINTLESS LITTLE STORY

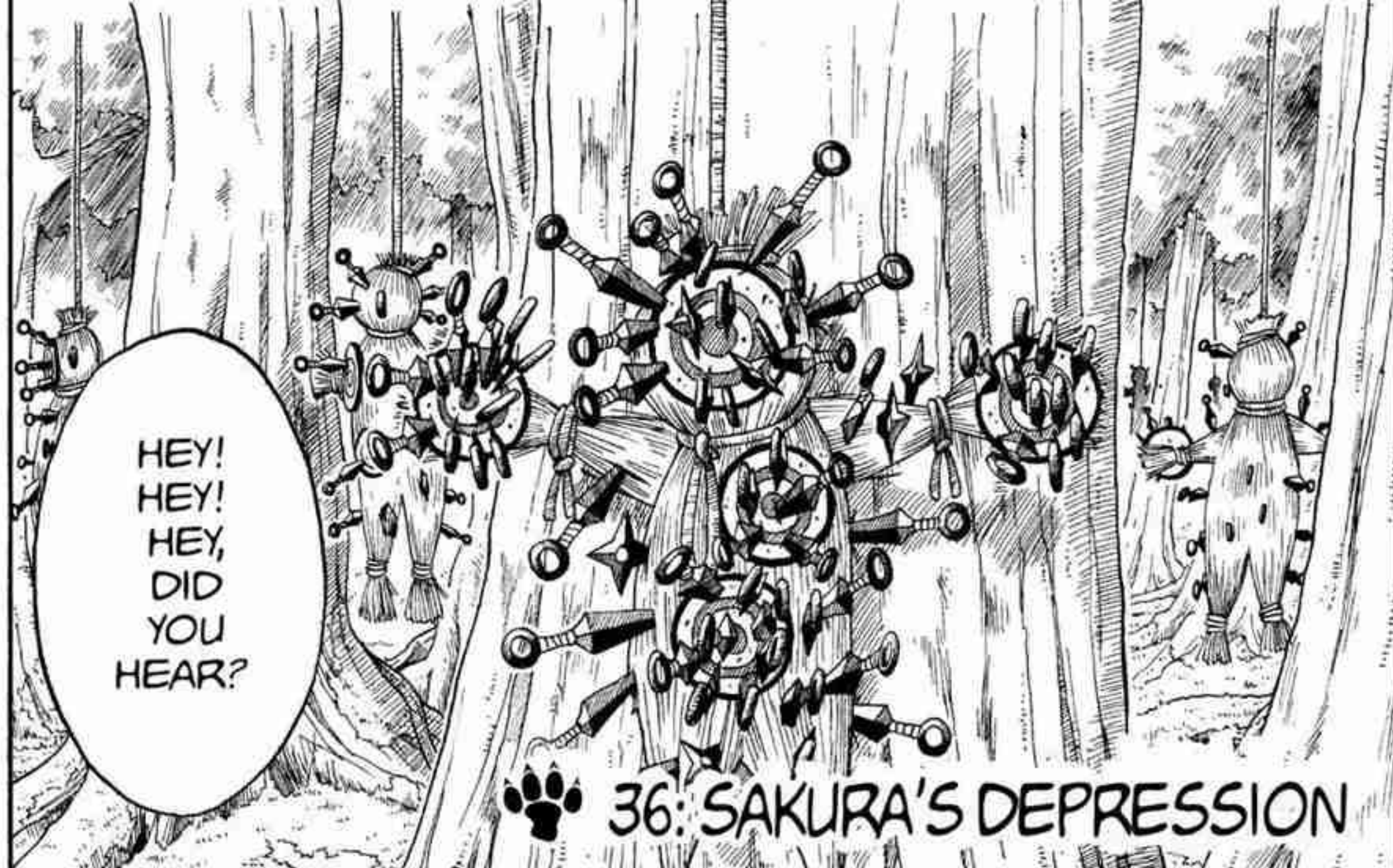


THE END

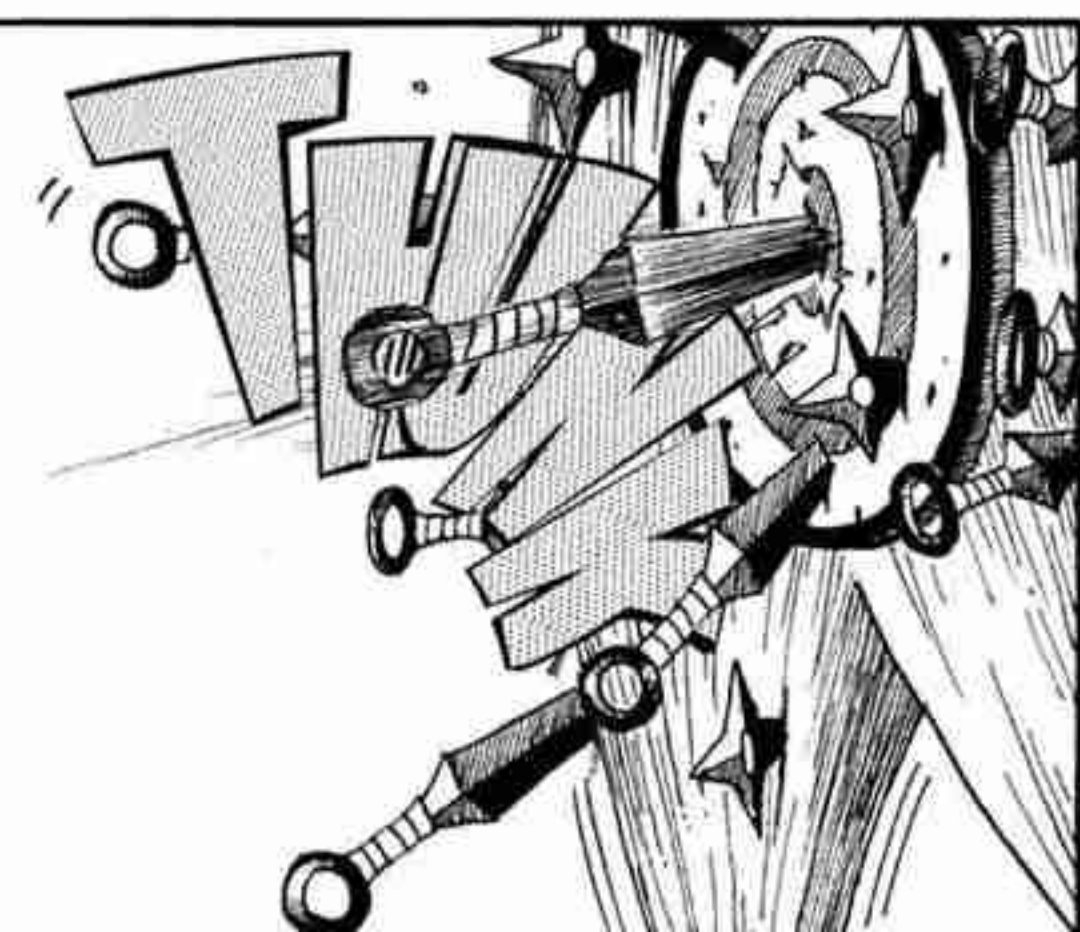
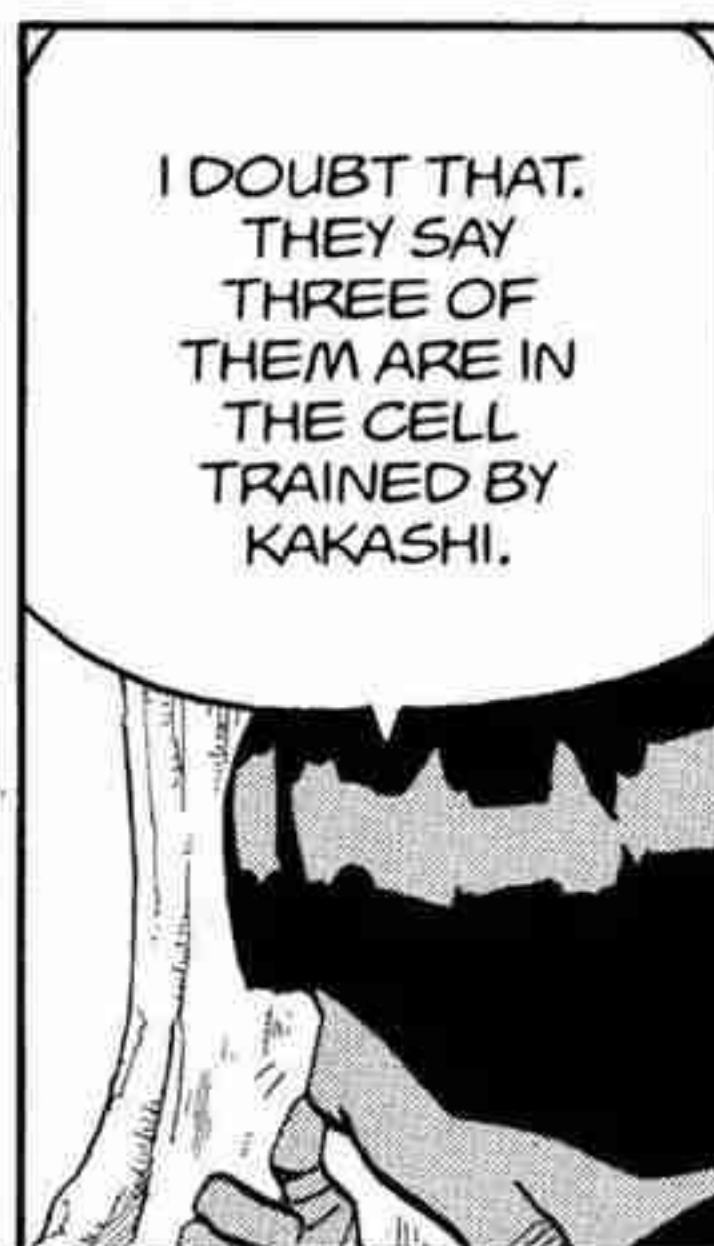


THE EIGHT-FRAME MANGA ON THE LEFT BRINGS BACK FOND MEMORIES FOR ME OF KOISHI, THE FRIEND WHO DREW IT FOR ME BACK IN COLLEGE. I HAD BEEN DRAWING MANGA SINCE MY HIGH-SCHOOL DAYS, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE A SINGLE FRIEND WHO SHARED MY PASSION. IN COLLEGE, I HEARD OF A GROUP OF MANGA FANS AND ASPIRING ARTISTS WHO CALLED THEMSELVES THE MANKEN, OR MANGA LAB. BUT THEY WEREN'T SO MUCH DRAWING MANGA AS THEY WERE PATTING EACH OTHER ON THE BACK FOR DRAWING PIN-UPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS WITH NO ATTEMPT AT STORYTELLING WHATSOEVER. I AVOIDED THOSE PHONIES LIKE THE PLAGUE AND WENT MY OWN WAY, TRYING TO DRAW ACTUAL MANGA.

THEN, ONE DAY, I MET A MAN WHO CLAIMED HE HAD DRAWN AUTHENTIC MANGA BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL. I HAD DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER HE WAS ON THE LEVEL, SO I CHALLENGED HIM. I WAS DETERMINED TO FIND OUT WHETHER HE WAS A REAL MANGA ARTIST OR ANOTHER PHONY. I DEMANDED THAT HE DRAW A TWO-PAGE STORY FOR ME ON THE SPOT. SO HE DREW THE MANGA ON THE LEFT AND GAVE IT TO ME. IT WAS A MOMENT OF INTENSE JOY FOR ME TO HOLD SOMEONE ELSE'S MANGA IN MY HAND LIKE THAT, FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME, AND I TREASURE HIS MANGA TO THIS VERY DAY.



 36: SAKURA'S DEPRESSION

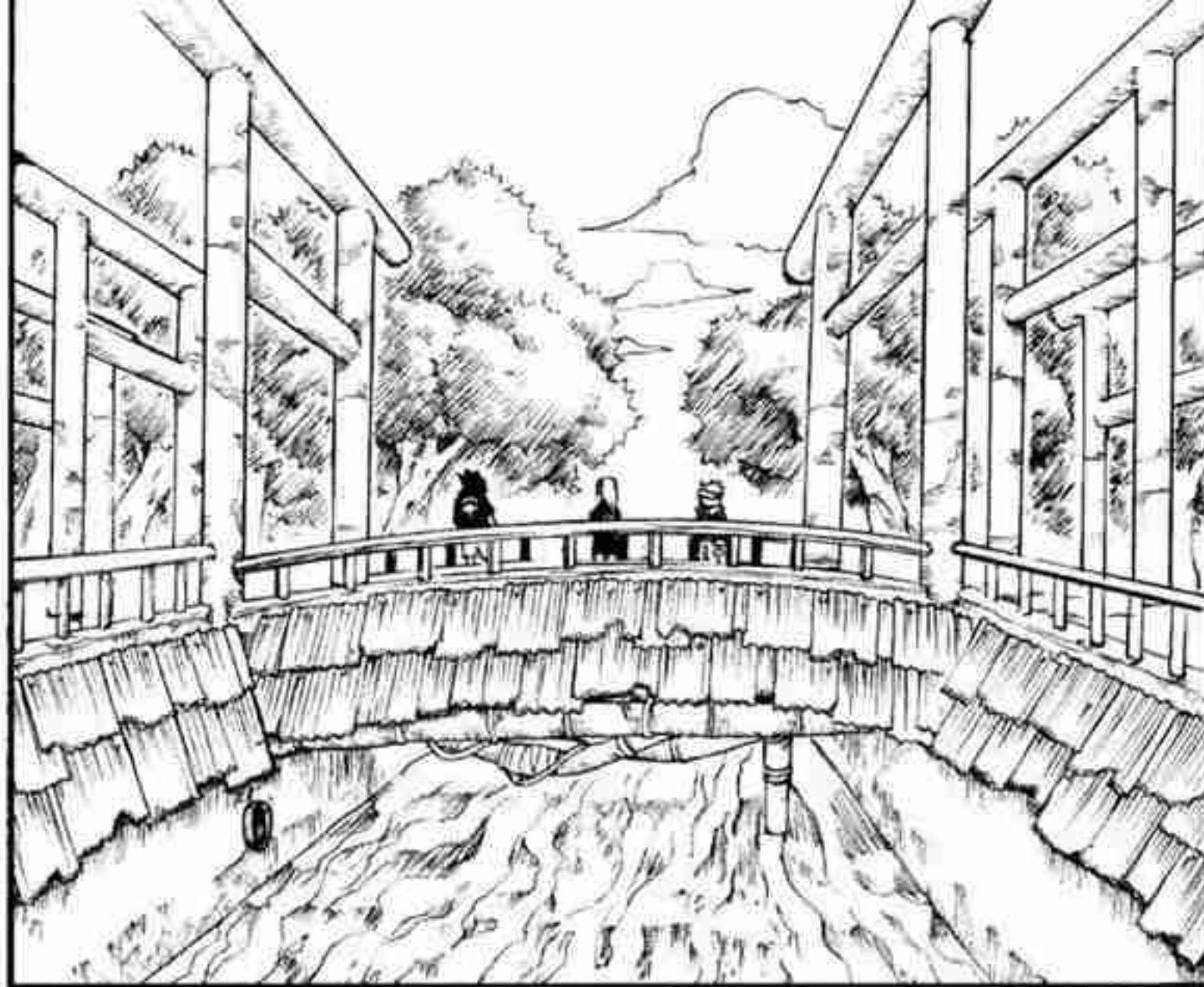


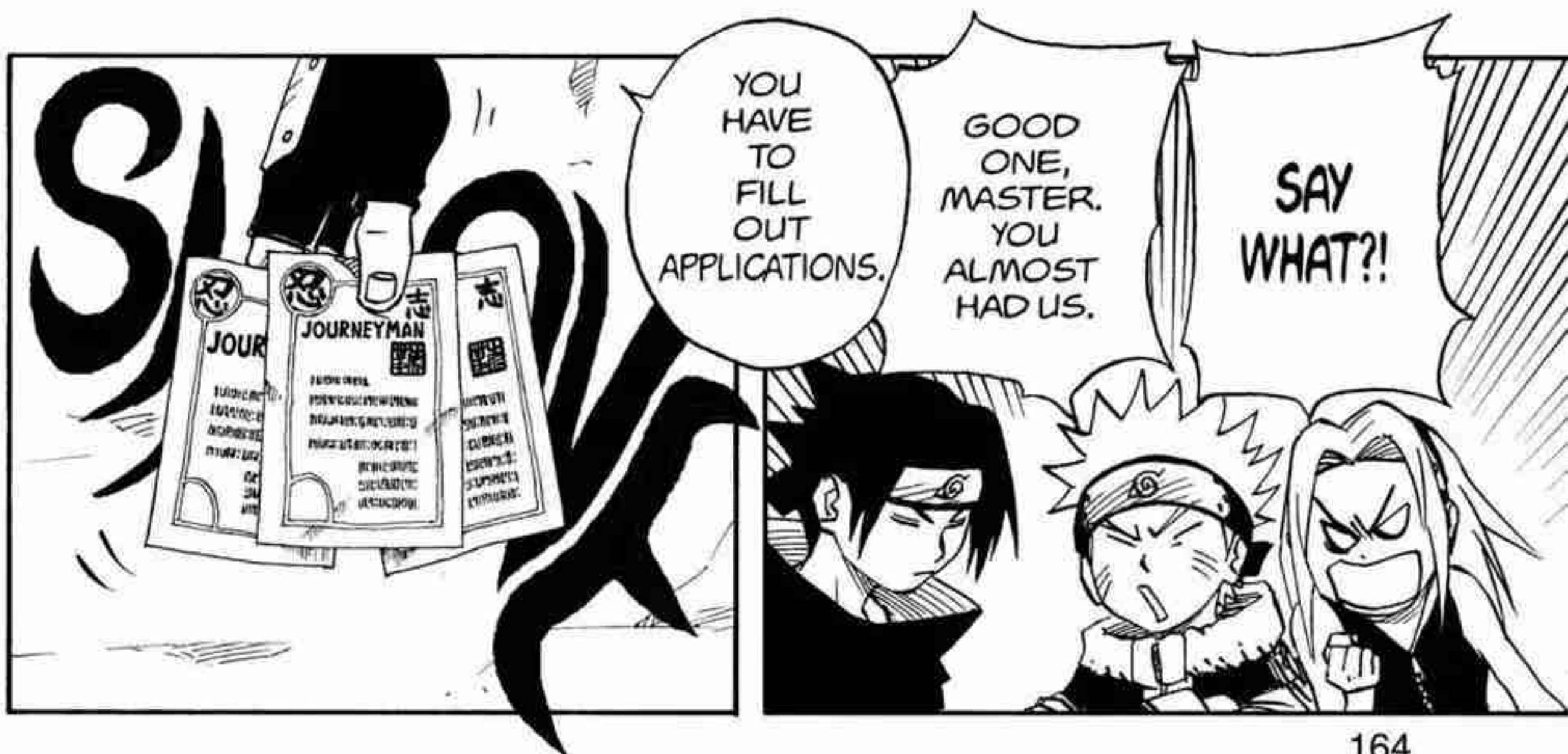


IT
ALL
HAS
A VERY
SAD
SOUND
TO
IT.



Number 36: Sakura's Depression







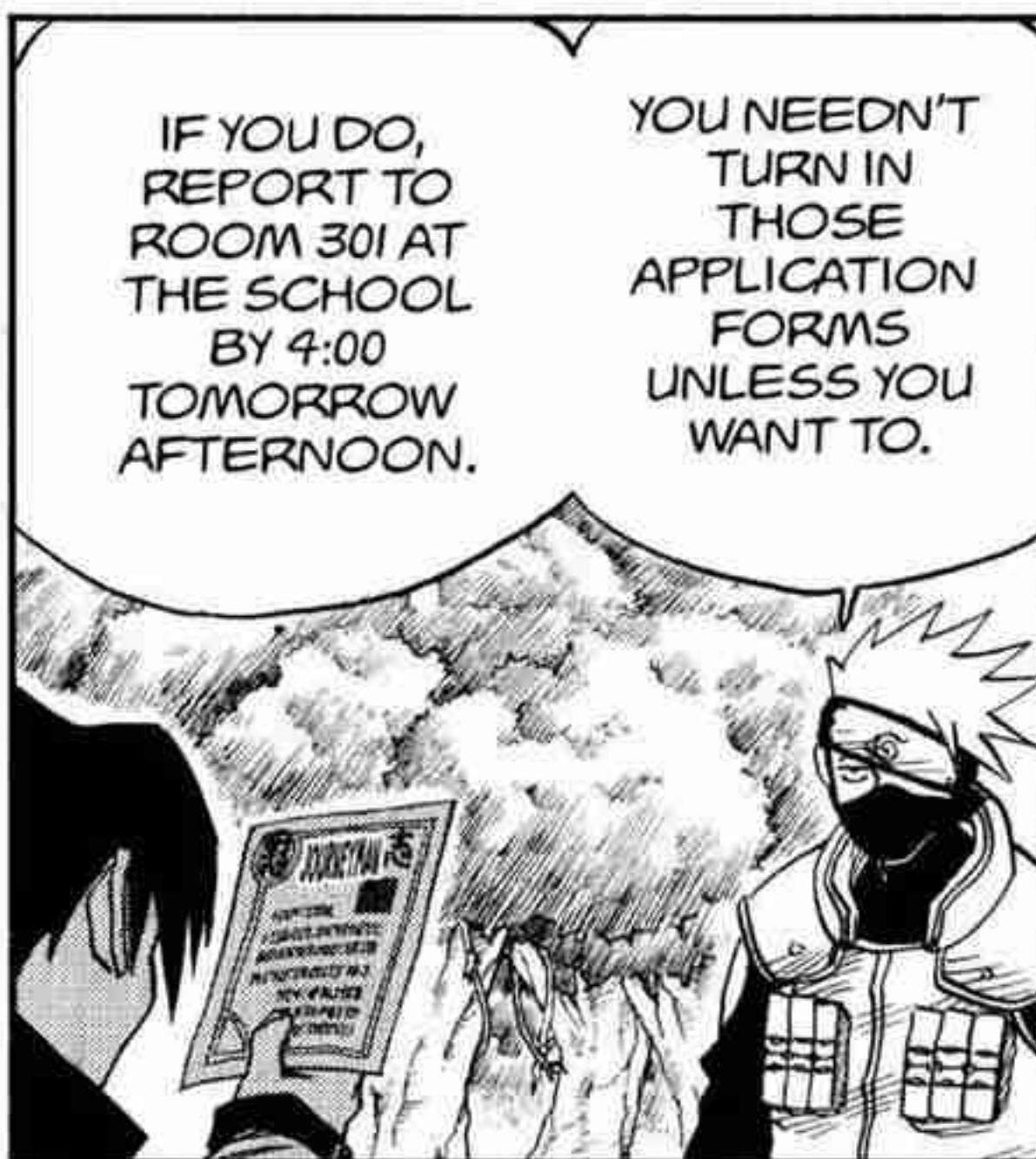
HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH



GET OFF...
YOU'RE
EMBARRASSING
ME!

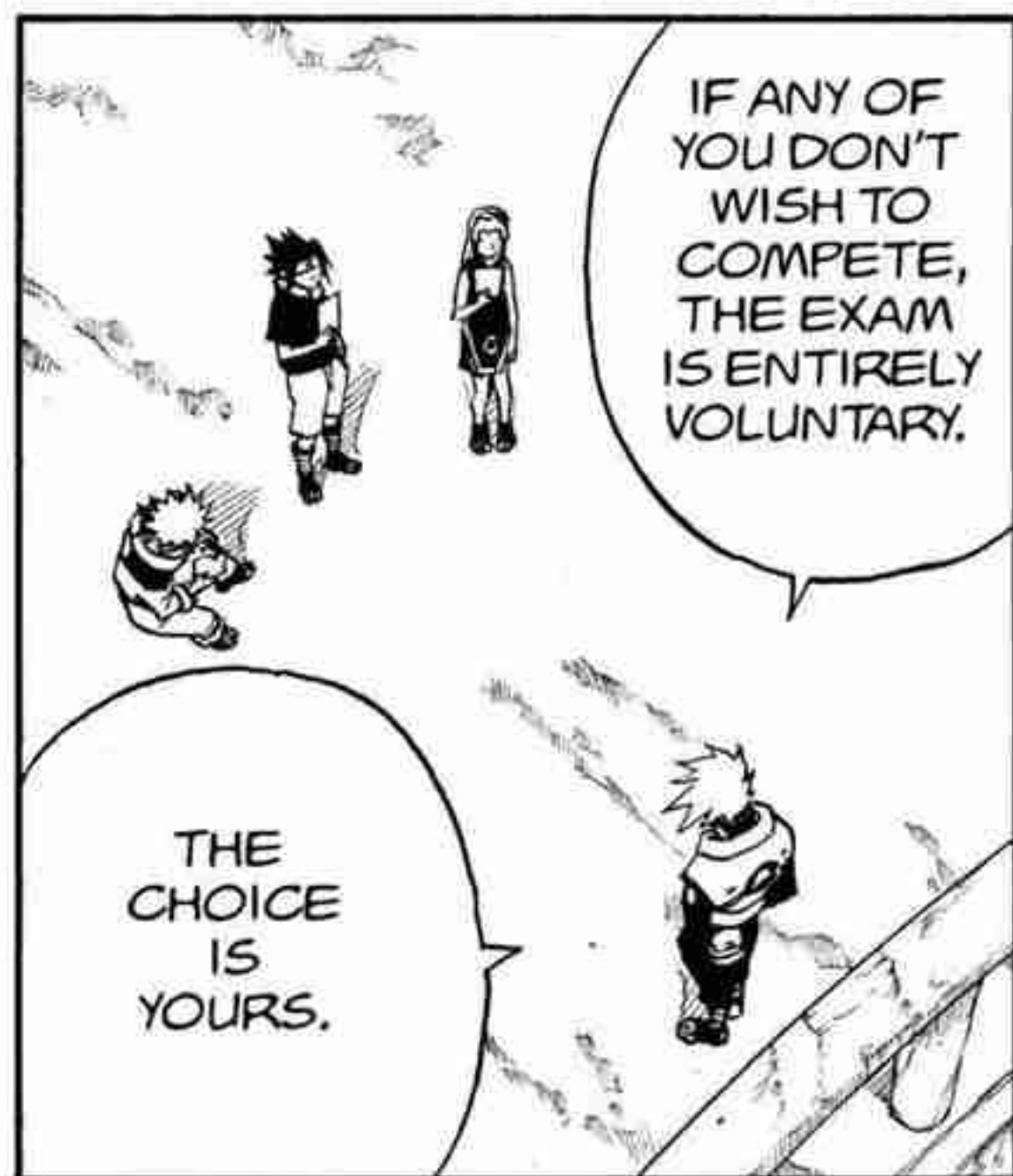
MASTER
KAKASHI,
I LOVE YOU!!

GRAB



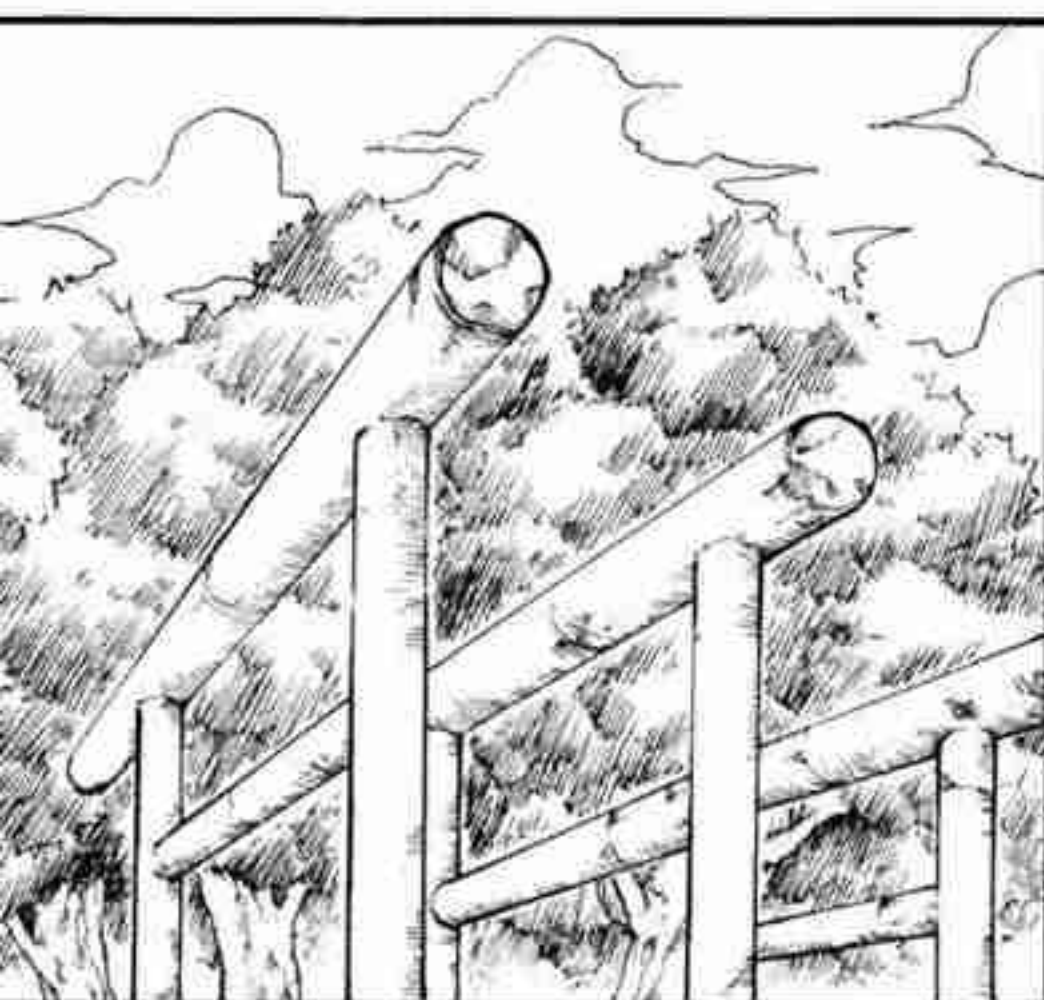
IF YOU DO,
REPORT TO
ROOM 301 AT
THE SCHOOL
BY 4:00
TOMORROW
AFTERNOON.

YOU NEEDN'T
TURN IN
THOSE
APPLICATION
FORMS
UNLESS YOU
WANT TO.



IF ANY OF
YOU DON'T
WISH TO
COMPETE,
THE EXAM
IS ENTIRELY
VOLUNTARY.

THE
CHOICE
IS
YOURS.

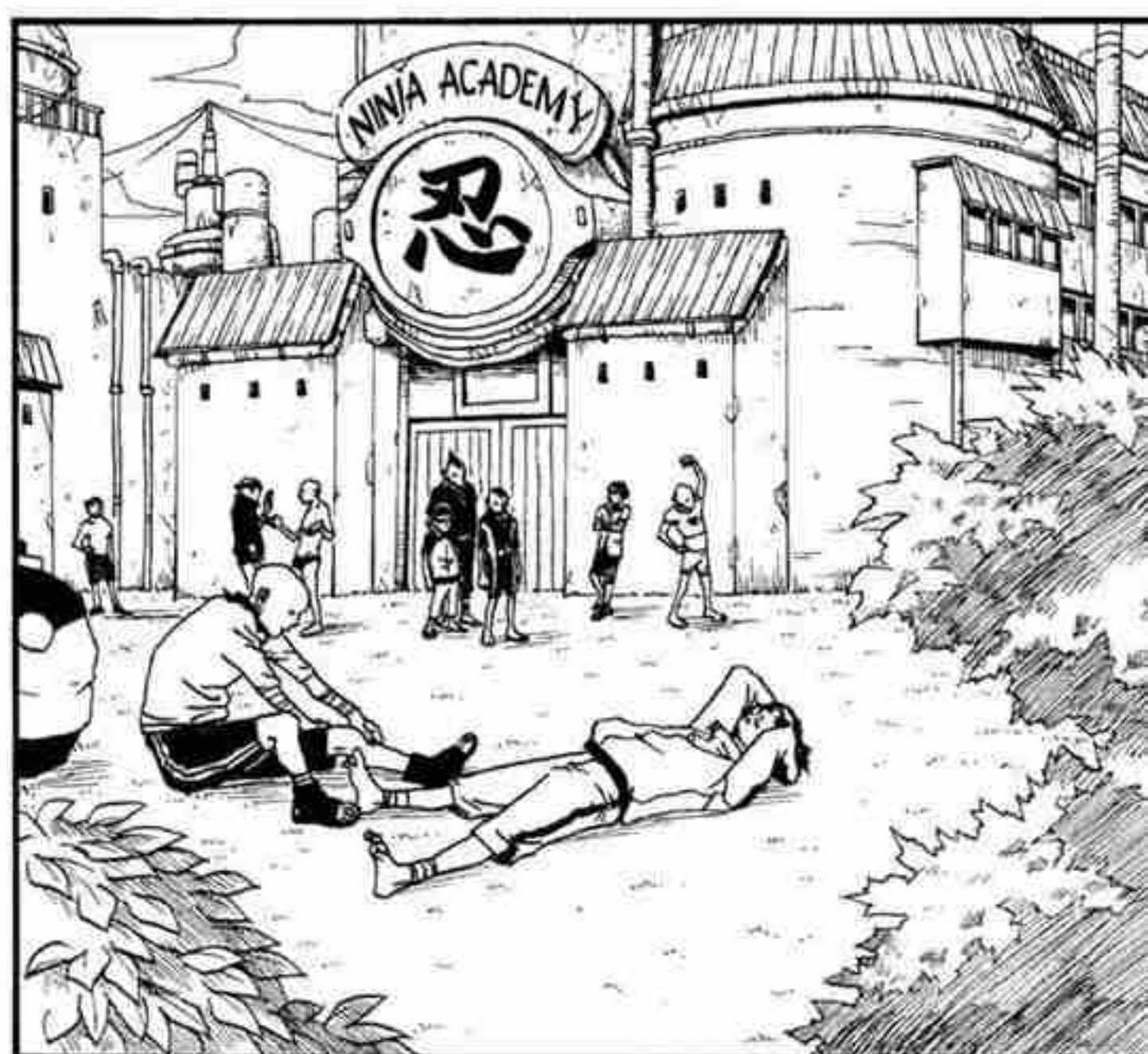


THAT'S
ALL!

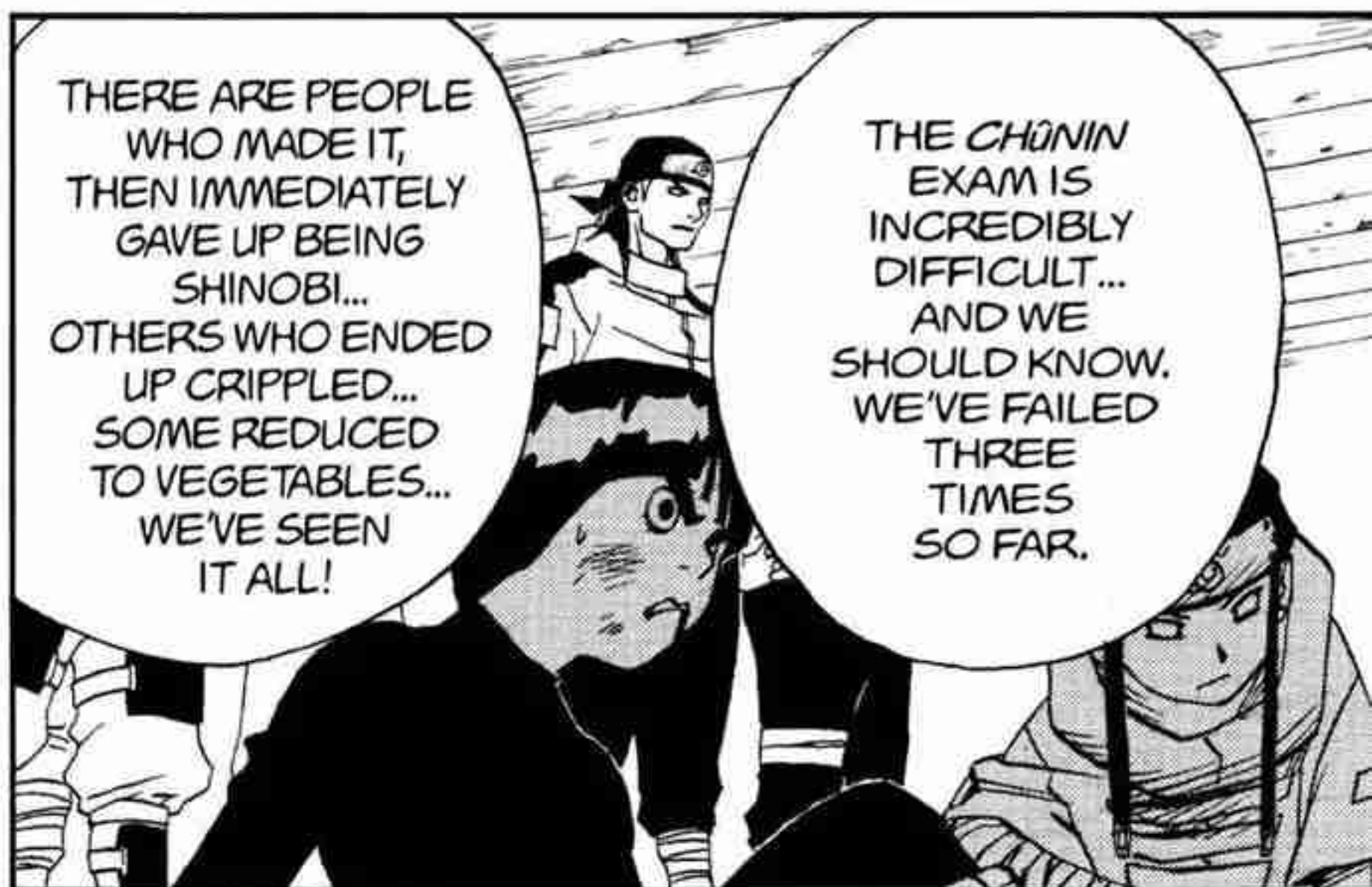


I MIGHT
GET TO
FACE OFF
AGAINST
THAT
SPOOK.











THAT
SOUNDS
GOOD
IN
THEORY...



WE'RE
SAVING
A STEP BY
WEEDING
OUT THE
OBVIOUS
LOSERS
BEFOREHAND.



WHO
KNOWS?

WHAT'S
HE
TALKING
ABOUT?

I HAVE
BUSINESS
ON THE
THIRD
FLOOR.

TAK

....!



AND
DROP THE
FORCE-FIELD
ILLUSION
YOU'VE
CREATED,
WHILE
YOU'RE
AT IT.

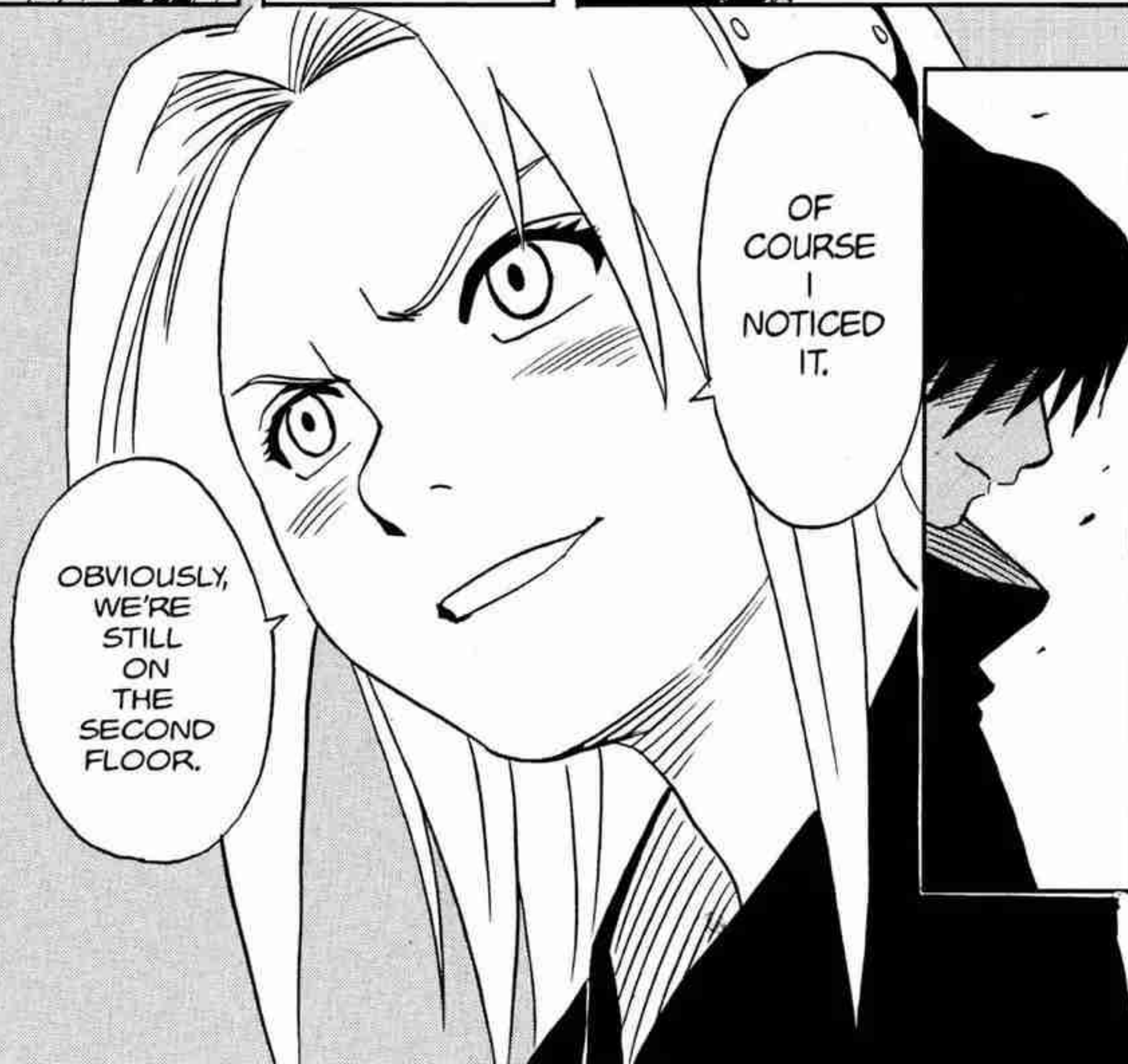
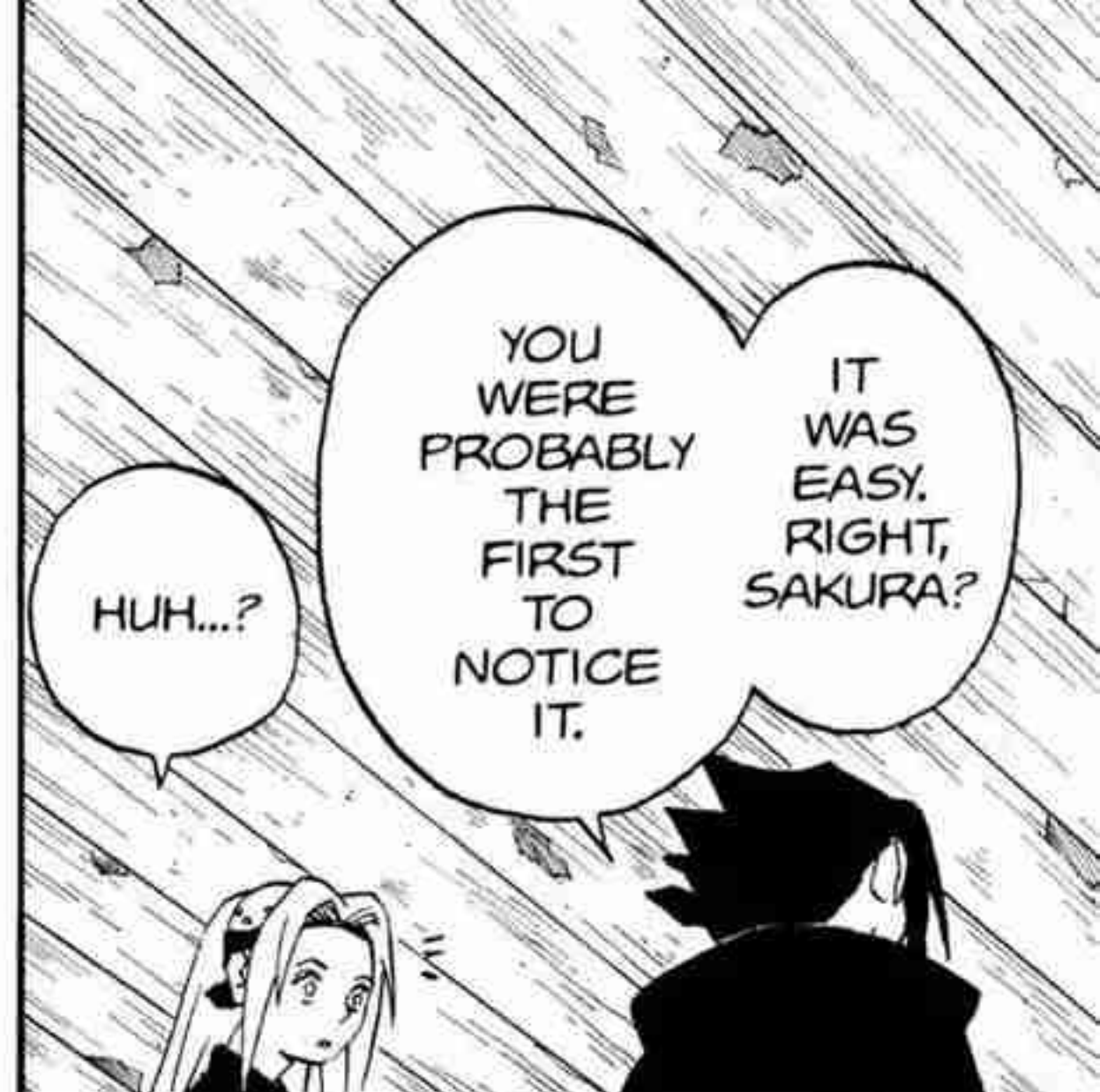
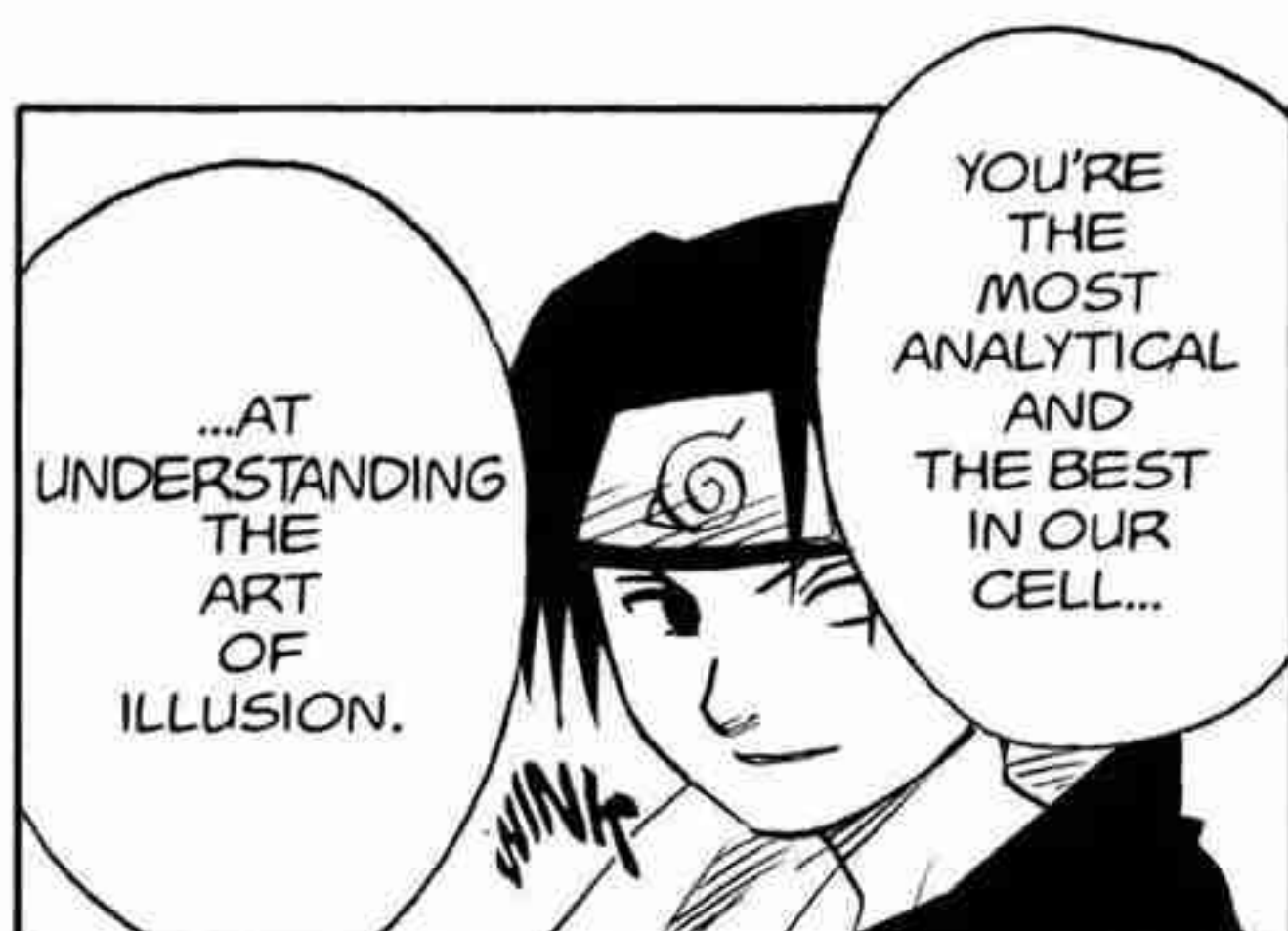
... BUT
YOU'D
BETTER
LET
ME
THROUGH.



SO
YOU
FIGURED
THAT OUT,
EH?



HEH...

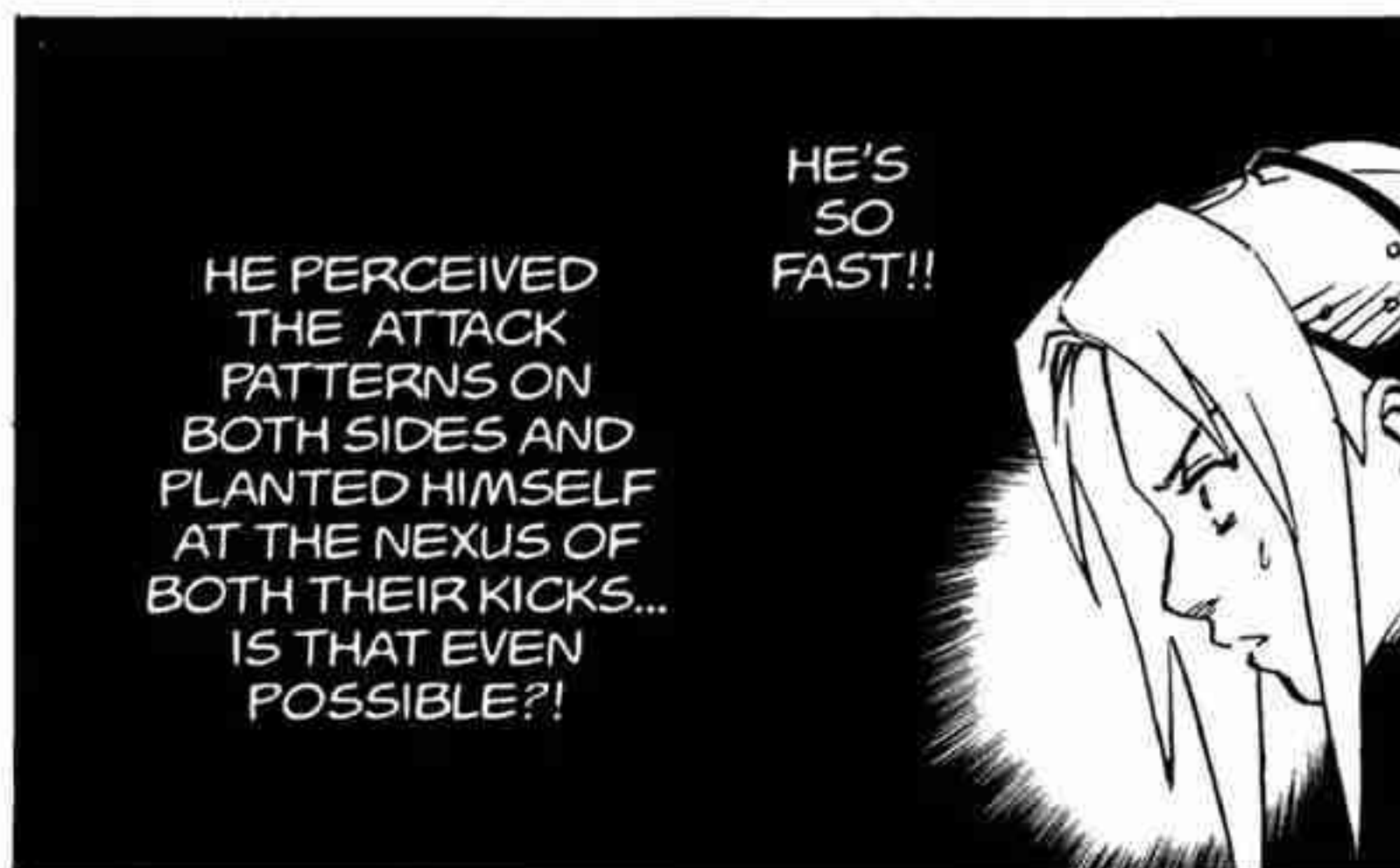




BUT
JUST
SEEING
THROUGH
IT
ISN'T...
SHORT

HEY...
NOT
BAD.



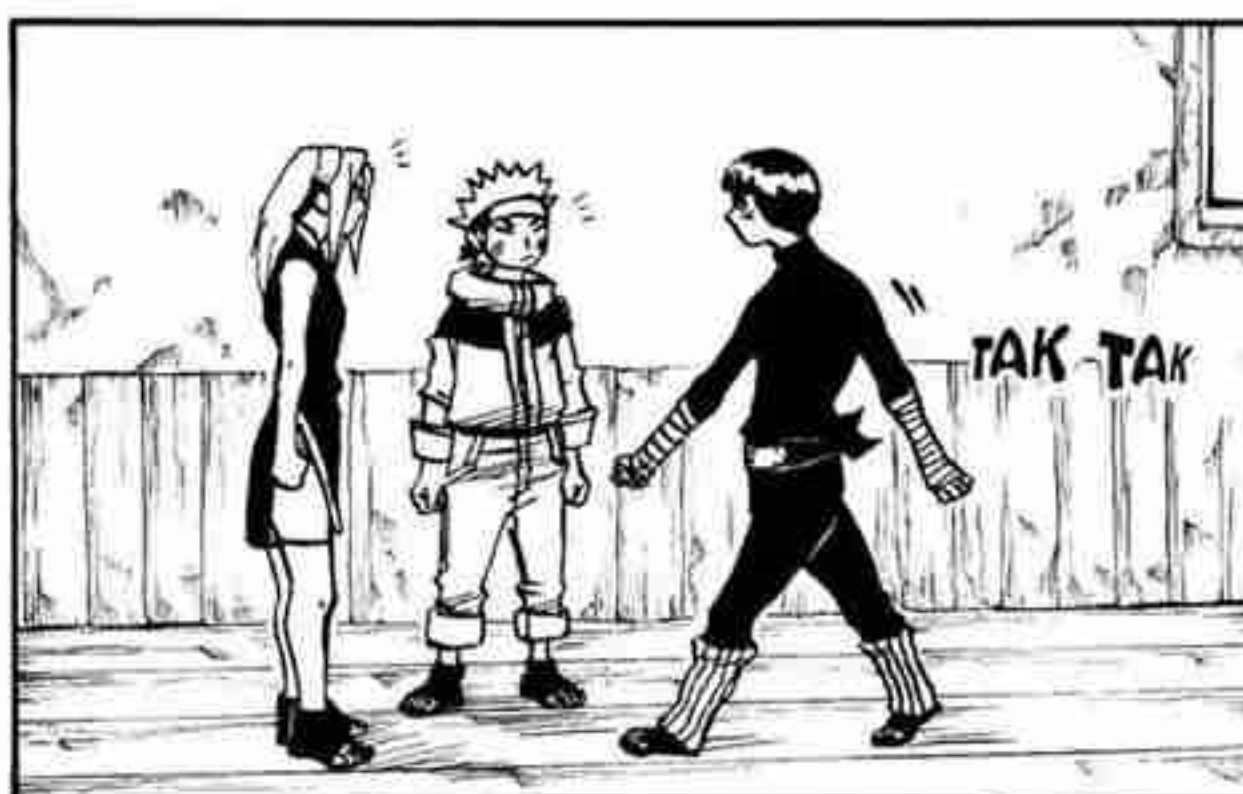


READ
THIS
WAY

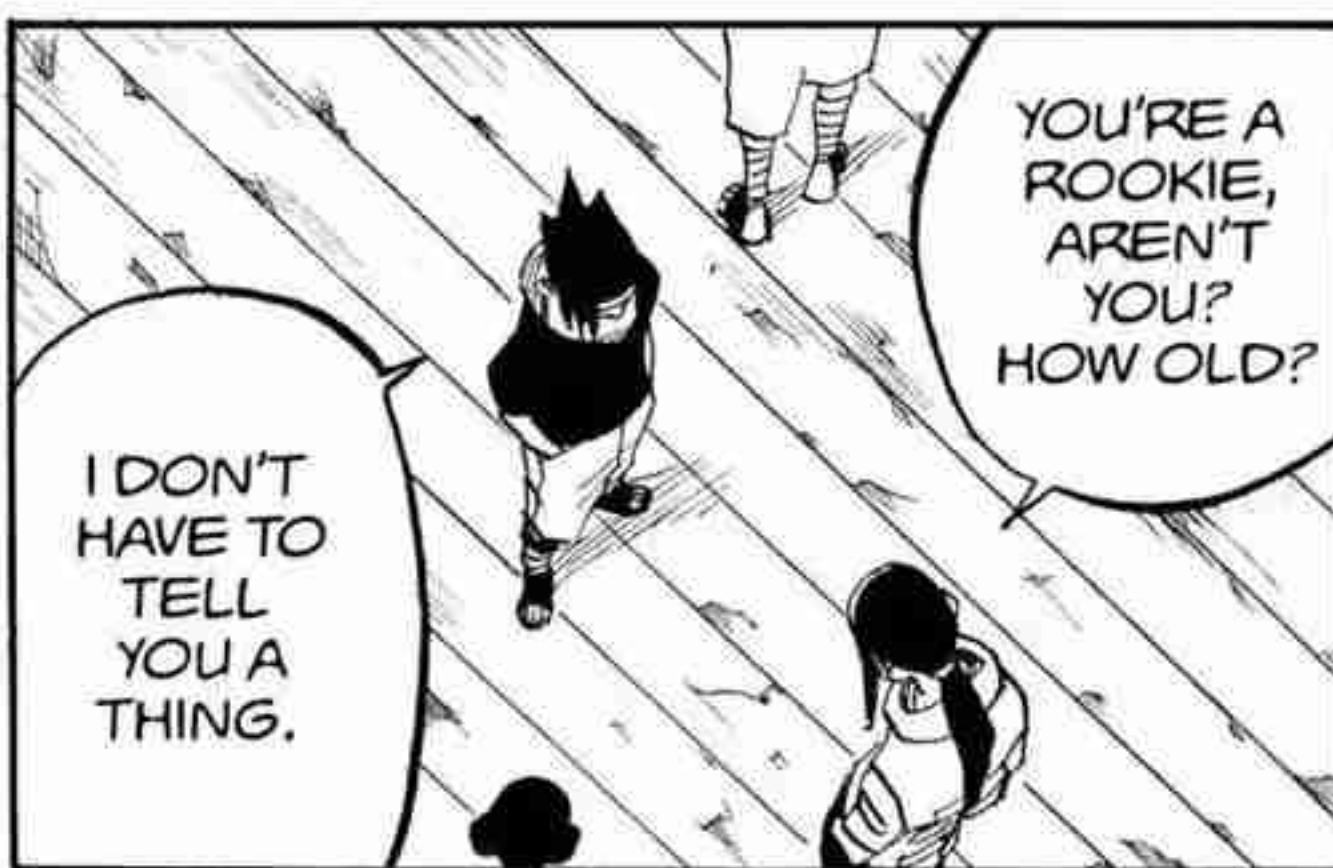


YOU'RE THE ONE WHO INSISTED WE SHOULD AVOID DRAWING ATTENTION TO OURSELVES.

THAT'S NOT WHAT WE AGREED!







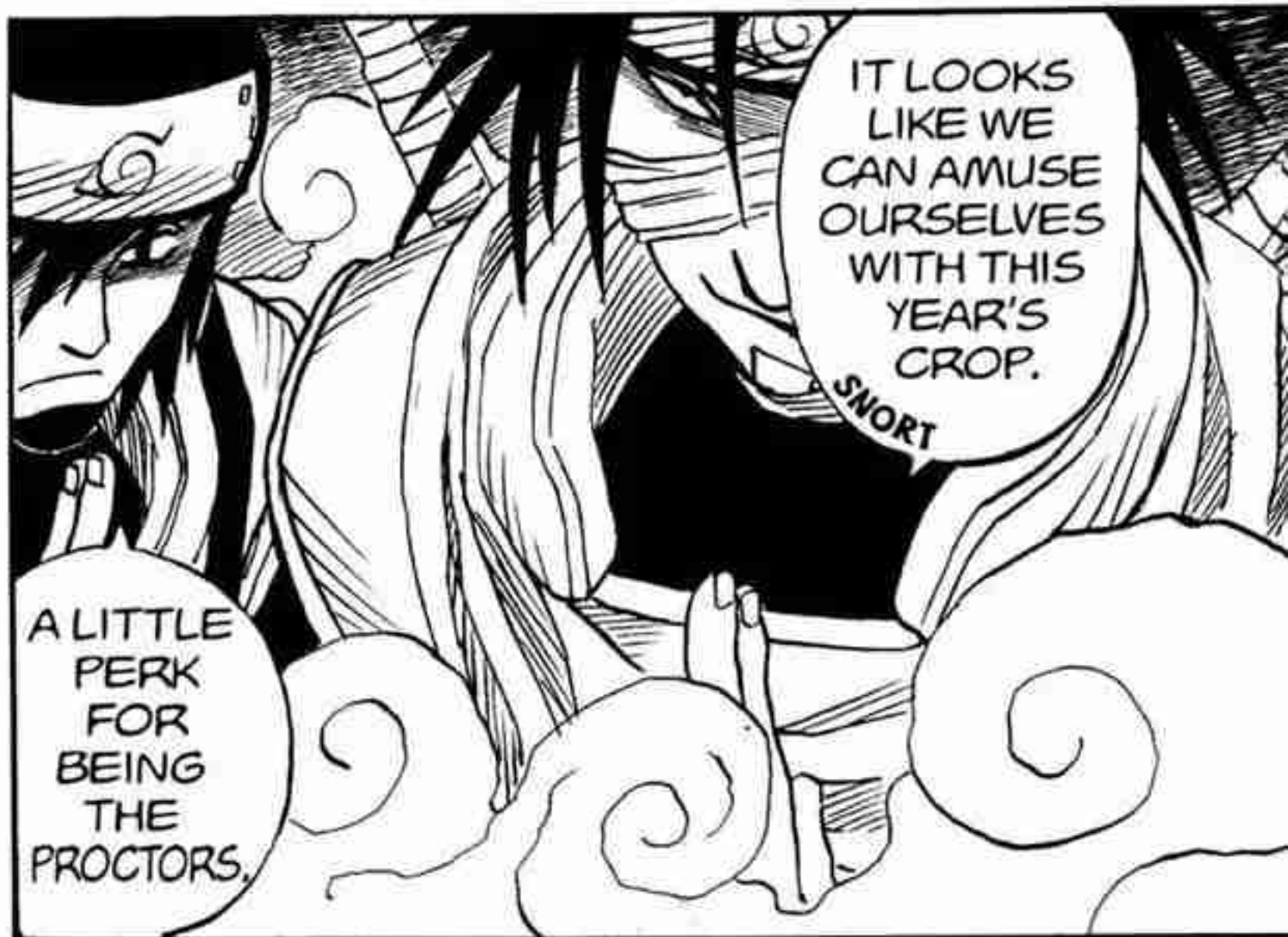


YEP.

HEH...
SO THOSE
ARE KAKASHI
AND GUY'S PRECIOUS
BRATS, EH? WELL,
AT LEAST THEY
MANAGED TO SUBMIT
APPLICATIONS.



NOW!
SASUKE,
NARUTO,
LET'S
GO!!



IT LOOKS
LIKE WE
CAN AMUSE
OURSELVES
WITH THIS
YEAR'S
CROP.

SNORT

A LITTLE
PERK
FOR
BEING
THE
PROCTORS.



LET'S GO,
LEE.
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?





TO BE CONTINUED IN NARUTO VOL.5!